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A CHARGE FOR FRANCE

AND OTHER STORIES

BY

JOHN HEARD, JR.

WITH TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS
JUNE, 1892

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" Crouched on the floor at his feet, Masima was holding the rifle she had just loaded."

[See p. 206.]

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TO

MY SON

WITH THE INJUNCTION TO REMEMBER AND PONDER

THIS PRECEPT

"Nihil humanum a me alienum puto"

NOTE

Of the following thirteen stories one only, *Miss Sarah's Experiment*, has not been published before. The initial story, *A Charge for France*, originally appeared in Scribner's Magazine, *Sancho Mitarra*, *Hand-car 412*, and *That Yank from New York* were first published in the Century, and *La Louve* is reprinted from the Cosmopolitan, in which it appeared under the title of *The Smuggler's Bride.* The others are taken from the pages of Harper's Weekly.

I beg the editors of these periodicals to accept my most sincere thanks for their courtesy in allowing me to collect in book form these waifs, to which they once extended the hospitality of their pages, and which they have recommended to the public through the acknowledged prestige of their publications.

The Author

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A CHARGE FOR FRANCE

A CHARGE FOR FRANCE

I

DURING his stay in the United States, Maurice de Saint Brissac was a great favorite among women; among men he was correspondingly disliked. The former believed that the mask represented the man, a kind of man they did not often meet among home-spun Americans, and to the more romantic he seemed to be a *grand seigneur* of the race Vandyck painted so well, and who had stepped down from his frame in some national gallery to criticise the progress of the world since his day. The latter envied his success, and, because of it, resented the superiority evinced in many ways by this man who was so different from themselves. In a way it soothed their wounded pride to call him a prig. But he was better than that. He did not believe in the stage business of his time. It was antiquated, and often ridiculous. It was insincere. It was very largely "pose." At the same time family traditions, the "honor of the name," the prestige of nobility, combined with wealth, demanded this sacrifice, against which all the finer instincts of the man rebelled. For Saint Brissac was a good man, as good men go nowadays, and a good deal of a man.

Had he belonged to the family of Smith, Jones, or Robinson, and been compelled to work for his living, he might have achieved even more than were enough to satisfy himself, and make him one of *the* few Smiths, Joneses, or Robinsons whose success has proved an incentive to subsequent generations of that name. Unfortunately, he was reared as a hot-house plant, and he respected the responsibilities of his position too highly to sacrifice them to a better sense of right and wrong, inherited, at second hand, from a New-England grandmother. Indeed, there was in his composition just enough of the old Puritan granite to leaven the enjoyment which might have followed his apparently easy successes in more than one field.

The life of such men is certainly not an enviable one. Their *ego* counts for naught until they are released from the bondage of training, and then it is too late for the natural and healthy development of the man that might have been. Saint Brissac's father admired the type of which M. de Camors is the literary exponent, and, *coûte que coûte*, his son should be such a *parfait gentilhomme*.

Maurice was nearly twenty-two when the old gentleman retired from this stage, and the prison-door was open. He looked out, and, to his amazement, looked out upon a world of men and women—a species to which he would fain belong, yet one whose life was incompatible with his training.

"It is a crime," he said, to himself; "and I feel like a Chinese woman whose feet have been so long compressed that she cannot walk. I have been brought

up for a world that ceased to exist in '89. Shall I go on? *Can* I go back?"

In his *milieu* it was impossible to go back, so he drifted along, taking infinite pains to accomplish, in the most correct manner, many things which he despised. It was nineteenth century to be bad, and he made people believe he *was* bad. After his emancipation he travelled through Europe and learned something, viz., that the perfection at which his father aimed, and to which he had endeavored to educate his son, was a very second-rate perfection, entirely out of date, and more often to be condemned than praised. One day this conviction became enough of a certainty to warrant immediate action. Several young men were writing a collective letter of invitation at the club, and there arose some slight discussion as to the use of the subjunctive.

"I may be wrong, *très cher*," said his contestant, "but Musset's apology is good enough for me. A gentleman should never write French well enough to be mistaken for a professional."

"Our code of honor is written in French," retorted Saint Brissac. "Perhaps you think a gentleman has the same inherited privilege of ignorance in that field."

"The grammar of honor is written in blood, not in ink. Heraldry, sir, is a fine science," replied his opponent.

"Then, if it meet your pleasure," Saint Brissac answered, bowing low, "we will compare arms on a field *vert*, under a bend *azur*."

"What nonsense, what nonsense!" he said to himself, as he left the club. "And to think that for such

absolute inanities two human beings *must* stand against one another, sword in hand, and each endeavor, as a duty, to cut the other's throat. Pshaw!"

The next step was obvious, with the result that Saint Brissac, though one of the best swordsmen in Paris, blundered to the extent of fatally wounding his adversary. Publicly he could not afford to be more than annoyed at his carelessness; at bottom, however, he was sincerely grieved, and made a vow never again to use weapons except in self-defence or in service of his country; and he then resolved to visit America, where a discussion about spelling did not necessarily involve a funeral.

At the club, as in society, the decision was received with consternation. Maurice made pretty speeches; the *Figaro* repeated them and quoted the admiring answers and comments of that exceedingly self-complacent *coterie* commonly called *Tout Paris*, an epithet which, in their ignorance of foreign idioms, they fondly believe to mean the whole intellectual world. There were farewell dinners, of course; the most brilliant being that given by the Junior Jockey, where Saint Brissac made his last and best speech. To an audience of a certain character the occasion was an impressive one. The majority of the guests still thought of America as their ancestors had thought of Louisiana, and to them Saint Brissac was a modern La Salle. They toasted him, bespeeched him, cheered him, mourned him; and so prone are we to allow our desires the gratification of prettily worded well-wishes run amuck, that he was really moved, despite the more sane criticism of his reason. He went away early, and

one of the guests of the evening, a young American, named Joe Sargent, overtook him on the stairs. The men knew each other slightly, and sauntered together down the Rue de Rivoli.

"Ah! my dear friend," the Frenchman said, with a sigh, "it is very hard to say good-by without showing one's emotions!"

There was an amused look in Sargent's eyes, and for a moment he checked himself. Then turning suddenly, as though the temptation were too great to resist,

"I should think so," he answered, smiling. "But it seems impossible to do so without creating the impression of being either a damned fool or a humbug—at least according to our ideas."

Saint Brissac stopped and looked up with a puzzled frown into the honest, laughing face, a few inches above his own.

"Well," he said, after a pause, and holding out his hand, "it is a new sensation to have the truth told one in that way; but I believe you meant it right. Indeed, I believe you *are* right. I am going to your country, and it is well I should become accustomed to your ways. I suppose," he continued, interrogatively, "that I shall often hear the truth as frankly expressed?"

"Why," Sargent replied, laughing, "if you are going to the Rocky Mountains, as you said this evening, you will probably hear plenty of plain talk—if that's what you mean. I am on my way there myself for a couple of months' shooting," he added, after a few reflective puffs at his cigar. "Won't you join our party? I

might put you up to a thing or two—and, frankly, I think you need it."

To all outward appearances two more dissimilar men never shook hands, yet this dissimilarity was largely one of manner. At bottom they had much in common. Both were men; both were gentlemen; and both believed that whatever a gentleman attempted he should carry out well, and without evident effort. There was much in the behavior of the one that astonished the other and delighted his sense of humor. But, after all, if the Saxon did occasionally laugh at the Latin, and *vice versa*, they were merely doing as individuals what their respective races had done for centuries, and this did not in any way prevent them from becoming close friends as they came to know each other better.

II

A YEAR later, in July, 1870, Joe Sargent was seated before the black, empty fireplace in his New York rooms, gloomily pulling at his pipe. The last comic papers and a couple of railroad novels littered the floor around his chair, and before him a large map of Mexico, half on his knees, half on the carpet, concealed a pile of crumpled papers—chiefly notes written on dainty sheets of various tints. It was dusk already, and through the open, screened windows the vulgar noises of the city came up more softly, in jerks, like the last lapping of an ebb-tide; for the hours of business

were over, and the city business of pleasure is dull at midsummer.

In the square below, an Italian organ-grinder was massacring "Santa Lucia" for the twentieth time, and a weary, perfunctory sort of an execution it was. But of all this Sargent was oblivious, as he had been of the more angry, irritating, noon-day street sounds; and he continued to pull at his brier mechanically, as though it were still alight. In his left hand, that hung over the arm of the chair, he held a flat, Russia-leather case, perhaps a photograph-frame, which he quietly slipped into his pocket as his bell rang.

"Come in!" he cried out, jumping up and moving a few steps towards the door. "Ah! Maurice, is it you? I am glad to see you."

"*Ce cher* Joe!" the other answered, running up and embracing him. "I have only just arrived in town, this noon, in fact, and heard at the club that you were here. I came at once, as you see, to say *bon jour* first, amuse you for half an hour, and bid you good-by—probably forever."

"Probably forever?"

"Yes; Napoleon has declared war against Bismarck; the news is not known yet, but I have been privately advised, and sail by the next steamer. Joe, what I am going to say will sound very foolish, even unmanly, to you. I know that a great many men come back from the war, but not as many as go into it—except perhaps on the pension-lists; and I have a feeling that I shall be buried on my first battle-field. Don't laugh at me for the presentiment. Under other circumstances I know it would not sound well. But, father and son, for

many generations, in fact from Agincourt to Inkermann, every Saint Brissac has died in the field—generally in his first engagement, always in his first campaign."

"Well, that's a fine record," his friend interrupted. "*Dulce et decorum*, . . ."

"To be sure!" the other answered, in his usual trenchant way. "It is an eminently correct sentiment, and proves that the gay poet was a gentleman as well as a philosopher. Give me a cigar, will you, Joe? To tell you the honest truth, *mon ami*," he continued, after a short pause, and walking slowly from one end of the room to the other, "I am more deeply moved by the news of this war than I can express to you in words. I have lived in Germany, as you know, and have looked into their military resources—superficially, of course, as an amateur like myself naturally would. But I saw enough to make me feel that France is going to be overwhelmed by one of the most appalling disasters ever recorded in history. It is that conviction that takes me over there; for, it goes without saying, I have no great sympathy with the Bonapartists. *We* owe them nothing. But France will need every arm in the Empire, mine among the rest. I tell you, Joe, this declaration of war is the most stupendous of all the follies that have distinguished this glorious Second Empire. It is *Napoléon le Petit*, whose glory is a little moonshine reflected from the sun of Austerlitz, against Bismarck the Great. I wish all Frenchmen had studied and remembered the meaning of Sadowa as well as I have! However, Joe," he continued, resuming his lighter manner, "all this interests you only

as an outsider, and it is puerile of me to talk in this strain. My place is a horse's length ahead of my men. I will not say good-by now, for you must come and see me off—day after to-morrow, at ten in the morning—the *Provence*. *Au revoir*, then."

After his friend's departure Sargent lighted another pipe and sat down to think. Once or twice he glanced inquiringly at the little leather case, but without opening it. When the pipe was smoked out, he rose with a jump, swept all his letters into a drawer, threw the leather case on top of them all, and turned the key. He glanced at the clock. "By Jove!" he exclaimed, "after nine. I must get a bite of something."

At the club, and while waiting for his dinner, he scribbled down memoranda on the back of the bill of fare, an occupation which he kept up between courses and while smoking his cigar over his coffee. Some one looked in at the door and called out to him,

"Hello, Sargent! Will you join us to-night?" and he made a gesture as though dealing cards.

"Come over here a minute, Durand," he answered. "No, I shall not join you to-night, I have lots to do. But I'll match you for a quarter."

The coins spun and Sargent lost.

"I thought so!" he said, aloud, as he stared at the silver piece. "Well, Durand, old man, the devil always gets his due—one way or another." He rose, slapped him on the shoulder, and laughed bitterly as he left the room, while the other said to himself,

"I never saw Sargent drunk before. Something must have gone wrong, surely. I wonder what it was."

A few hours later the big steamer swung clear of the dock, and Saint Brissac stood at the rail, scanning the line of waving handkerchiefs through his single eye-glass. Sargent had not appeared, and his friend felt deeply disappointed. Joe was his only American friend —the only person, in fact, to whom he had confided his intention of sailing. In the promiscuous mob of travellers he seemed to be the sole one whom nobody had come to bid "God-speed," and he felt both lonely and depressed.

They were in mid-stream now, headed for the ocean, and the Palisades of the Hudson, half-screened by a veil of golden mist, receded gradually into the horizon. The harbor, alive with screaming tugs and ferry-boats, looked its loveliest. The slow quivering of the floating city, freshly painted, and gleaming red, white, black, and gold, in the wet sunlight, lulled one agreeably into a state of poetic contemplation. But on Saint Brissac these soothing influences were lost, and he said to himself, bitterly,

"*C'est toujours la même rengaîne!* And friendship is the same the world over—a matter of convenience or opportunity—just as love is a matter of juxtaposition. This fellow whom . . ."

Some one touched him on the shoulder, and he turned to look into the pleasant smiling face of the man he was reviling.

"Joe!" he cried out, joyfully, "*C'est toi!*" And somewhat to the edification of the surrounding groups of passengers, he embraced him joyfully.

"You were late and got left?" he asked, as they sat down on the wet rail-bench.

Sargent shook his head and held out his brawny right arm. "For France!" he said, smiling.

"Do you really mean it?"

"Why not, Maurice? You said France needed every arm she could get. Well, here is one. What on earth have I got to do in the world? A man cannot always be hunting, or fishing, or travelling, dining at the club and going to the theatre."

"Or into society?"

"Isn't it much the same thing?"

It was so unlike Sargent to make a remark that smacked ever so little of bitterness, that Saint Brissac looked up quickly, and before his sharp, intelligent scrutiny the other turned away with an awkward smile. After a moment of silence the Frenchman laid his hand on Sargent's arm, and said, very gently, in a voice that expressed his sympathy more perfectly than could any words,

"An arm for France, . . . Joe? France is sometimes typified by an eagle, sometimes by a flag, and sometimes by a goddess. There is always a woman in the case."

Sargent made no answer, and neither again alluded to the subject.

III

A FEW weeks later, on the morning of the famous 6th of August, the two friends were riding side by side through the cool, green shade of the Haguenau forest.

In their search for General Duhesme they had passed around the extreme right of the French army, and were continuing their quest in a somewhat aimless way through a country already occupied by the enemy. Now and then, as they peered into the green depths of foliage, they caught the glint of a rifle barrel and a glimpse of a *franc-tireur's* blouse. Sometimes the color of their amaranth breeches, for they wore undress staff uniform, seemed to reassure their would-be slayer, and he stepped on to the road to ask what might be the news of the day; and in turn they asked information as to their way. Positive advice they never received. "It might be this, it might be that, . . . but again—" and everywhere they were confronted by the fatal ignorance of facts and places, which contributed as much as any other cause to the misfortunes culminating at Sedan.

The shadow of impending disaster lay heavy on the land, and the nearer they approached the seat of war, the darker it grew.

In Paris all was confusion. A hundred conflicting despatches were received daily at the War Department, but only the most encouraging were sent out for publication. The probability of an invasion had never been contemplated, and all the plans of the French were drawn up on the basis of a march to Berlin. A defensive campaign was such an improbability that the French had never considered it as a possible contingency. The classes in Paris knew enough to be anxious, but the masses interpreted such news as was doled out to them according to their own desires, and studied the map of Germany with pathetic ignorance. Many a

concierge and his wife invested a few laboriously-saved francs in a large map of Prussia, and planted red-headed pins where they believed their son ought now to be. Wissembourg had not been fought, and in the story of the first skirmishes the facts had been colored with more than poetical license. The axiom of the day was simply that France was invincible. Hence, if a battle had been fought, the enemy must have been routed; if not routed, at least defeated; if not defeated, and this interpretation of the news was improbably conservative, the Prussians had been checked. Such a neutral result aroused the contempt of the disputatious plebs. In the *cafés*, in the *brasseries*, on extemporized platforms, the long down-trampled hydra of republicanism raised its heads, snarled loudly, angrily, at the evident degeneracy of the French army, and predicted —nay, clamored for—the fall of the Empire. And they builded better than they knew, for the *dégringolade* was at hand.

Arriving in the midst of such confusion, Saint Brissac had experienced no difficulty in securing a pass for his friend Sargent's American weapons and ammunition; still less in obtaining for both a staff appointment at large, which would allow them to choose their own fighting-ground. This was totally at variance with any existing army regulations, but Saint Brissac had such influential friends that the favors he requested were conferred with a celerity that implied a fear of non-acceptance on his part. Good men seemed suddenly to have become scarce in France.

On the eve of their departure from Paris, Saint Brissac went up to Sargent's room and brought him

his uniform. Joe looked up from the map he was studying, and noticed that his friend was very pale.

"Any news?" he asked, in his characteristically careless way.

"Yes; we start at eight in the morning; staff officers. I'll tell you about it on the way," Saint Brissac answered. Then he added, after a pause, during which he nervously paced the room: "The enemy is in France. But, Joe, I suppose you cannot understand what that means to me."

Sargent replied, phlegmatically: "Well, if the enemy is in France, the next thing to do is to drive him out." As he raised his eyes he was struck with the expression of anguish on Saint Brissac's face. "Come, Maurice," he said, rising and laying his hand on his friend's shoulder, "things always seem worse on the day before. When we are out there and get to work, you'll see everything in a different light. Brace up, old man! If it comes to the worst, why, we can continue this little trip together, shoulder to shoulder, away into the happy hunting-grounds."

"What a blessing you are, Joe," the other answered, suddenly smiling and looking up at the square, rugged face of his companion. "The indifference and carelessness which we learn to assume are perfectly natural to you; and what a difference there is between the genuine and the imitation article! I assure you it does me more good to listen to you for five minutes than to spend an hour at the War Department and hear the—I suppose you would call it hurrahing—of a lot of men, clever men, too, who are trying to hide the truth behind a screen of traditional convention-

alities and phrases. Have you ever seen any fighting, Joe?"

"You would hardly call it fighting, I suppose," Sargent answered, laughing. "I served through a couple of Apache campaigns, for the fun of it, and so I do know what a bullet sounds like when it passes an inch or two away—and that is a trick those Apache bullets have. I guess I'll do well enough, Maurice, because," he continued, with a drop in his voice—"because as far as I am concerned I don't care a d—— how it all turns out. In a tight corner it helps a man to know that he has no family responsibilities; no letters to read over at the last minute, and all that sort of thing. Johnny Steens, who, by the way, was killed in one of our brushes with the Indians, used to say that he should prefer to start out as a foundling, with just money enough to make a start as a Gil Blas or some such *picaro*. I guess there is something in that. A fellow could afford to take big chances then and have lots of fun. Well, you say we're off in the morning, eh? Suppose, then, we quit swapping lies and get ready."

Their journey from Paris to the front was a horrible nightmare to Saint Brissac; a stern disillusion to Sargent. For, though he modestly alluded to his campaigns in Arizona and Sonora as mere hunting trips, he had there received such training and such correct critical insight as well-organized campaigns often fail to give. It was apparent to him that disorder was everywhere the order of the day; confusion and ignorance the watchwords. Saint Brissac bit his mustache in despair. Joe smoked grimly; but neither spoke.

They understood each other and there was nothing to say.

The morning was well-nigh noon before they found the old general, seated under a tree on a knoll overlooking a part of the battle-field. In a little hollow behind, the Eighth and Ninth Cuirassiers stood dismounted by their horses, and still farther back two squadrons of the Sixth Lancers halted at ease. A mile and a half away the picturesque little village of Morsbronn lay across the plain, like a brown lizard, quivering in the intense heat. To the left the deep booming of the artillery alternated with the sharp, snarling tattoo of the musketry. The distant clumps of woods were cushioned with rounded clouds of smoke that dissolved slowly, and hung in shreds across the tree-tops. Here and there, through the fields of hops, broken black lines advanced and patches of red receded. Fifty thousand Frenchmen were losing a battle against one hundred and eighty thousand Germans. But the fight was yet only at its height, and, though the result was a foregone conclusion, the defeated were not yet beaten, nor the conquerors victorious.

Just outside of the circle of staff officers Saint Brissac and Sargent dismounted, threw their reins to an orderly, and stepped up to where the general stood.

"Do you bring orders?" he asked, without taking his field-glass from his eyes.

"No, sir; we come to take them," Saint Brissac answered, as he handed a letter to the general.

"Why, Maurice, is it you?" the old gentleman exclaimed as he wrung the soldier's hand. "How glad I am to see you! What can I do for you?"

"My friend, Mr. Sargent and I, general, crave the honor of a charge with you."

"Charge?" the old soldier answered, testily. "Who the devil told you we were going to charge?"

"Excuse me, general. What else were cuirassiers made for?"

"Quite right, my boy, quite right. It was so up to Waterloo; but everything seems to be wrong to-day. Later, perhaps, we may have the pleasure of doing our duty." Then calling to his chief staff-officer, he said to him, "These gentlemen will ride with the Eighth."

"In what capacity, general?"

"Privates," answered Saint Brissac, promptly.

The general waved his hand in acquiescence and said, kindly: "*Nous nous reverrons—peut-être!*"

As they were about to move away a couple of bullets sang through the trees above them, and their attention was drawn to a group of Prussians emerging from an apple orchard about six hundred yards away. A mounted officer, a few steps ahead of his men, examined the French through his glasses and directed the fire of the sharpshooters. Somewhat to the contemptuous astonishment of the French officers, Sargent had dropped behind a rock as the first bullet pinged above him, and a second later the sharp, stinging report of his 45–90 rang out twice. When the smoke had cleared they saw a riderless horse galloping away, and before the suddenly deserted orchard wall, two dark objects lying on the road. Sargent had raised himself on one knee and was quietly replacing his two spent cartridges.

"*Mâtin!* Monsieur Sargent," the general exclaimed.

"You do not speak often, but, when you do, your words are to the point!"

Joe laughed as he straightened himself, still cautiously scanning the woods ahead. "If those fellows had been Apaches, general," he said, in his frank, familiar way, "you would be snug behind that tree-trunk, or a dead man in front of it, and I wouldn't be such a fool as to stand out of the shadow of that rock for better than half an hour."

"*Voyez vous cela!*" exclaimed one of the officers. "*Ces Américains sont impayables!*"

"I bet, general," interrupted Saint Brissac, "you thought he was afraid when he dropped like the ace of clubs behind that rock. 'Pon my honor, if I hadn't seen him at work after big game I'd have thought so myself."

Duhesme was looking approvingly at Sargent's large, careless figure. "I shall never think so again," he said, quietly. "Now, gentlemen, to your posts! Monsieur de Satory will look after you. Ah! Satory! one moment, please," he added, as they moved away. "Put that young Goliath somewhere near the flag."

In the little ravine below, the men were listening anxiously to the rumbling of the battle. Half-way between them and the group of staff-officers an old bugler, erect on his white horse, waited eagerly for orders. Now and then a lost shell dropped among the compact crowd and created a momentary confusion. Then the wounded were carried away, and the dead laid against the green bank, face upward, gazing, with sightless eyes, at the blue eternity above. On the edge of the road a few frightened peasants leaned on their

shovels and gaped, open-mouthed, at the magnificent soldiers before them. As long as there remained such men to fight for her, France—and they—must be safe.

From time to time a false alarm caused a passing flurry in this mass of iron-clad men, as would a breeze rippling through a grove of poplars. The troopers cursed under their breath, the officers grumbled, and then all dropped back again into a semblance of apathy. But nevertheless the suspense was intolerable, and even the steadiest trembled with suppressed excitement.

As De Satory, Saint Brissac, and Sargent came towards them the soldiers moved nearer to their horses, ready to mount, and a couple of officers rode forward to meet them.

"Well, at last?" they cried out.

"No, there is nothing!" Satory answered, curtly. "Here, put those dead men underground with each a sword-handle for a cross. Take off their armor. These gentlemen will charge with the Eighth and need accoutrements. Get those peasants to work, and send Captain Moirac to me at once. Captain," he continued, as that officer rode up, "I present you Mr. Sargent, an American, and the Comte de Saint Brissac. They will ride next to the color-bearer. The general requests that they be properly armed."

"Saint Brissac here!" the captain exclaimed, holding out his hand. "I thought you were in America. It is delightful to see you again . . . gambling as usual; . . . it is *rouge et noir* this deal, preceded by a little *piquet*. . . ."

"*Parbleu!*" answered Maurice, in the same light-hearted tone; "we lead hearts!"

"Good! against the clubs of Prussia and the diamonds of Bavaria."

"But black will take the stake," broke in De Satory. "Mark my words, gentlemen, spades will cover hearts and diamonds and clubs alike; spades will be trumps this evening," he repeated, riding away.

"Our friend is lugubrious," cried Saint Brissac, laughing, as he watched the other moving off.

"And no wonder," remarked a young lieutenant who had joined the party; "we have not had a decent bottle of wine for ten days."

Accoutred in dead men's armor the friends waited in the saddle on either side of the stalwart color-bearer. The lines were not very straight, and whenever a shell dropped among them they swung to and fro, or fronted about to make room for the dismal processions of dead or wounded that passed between them to the rear. The horses fretted and champed their bits; the men played with their swords and cursed at their enforced inactivity. All around, the deafening din of the battle swayed back and forth, now fainter, now louder, as the breeze blew this way or that; and yet no news, no orders, reached them. Then suddenly the firing seemed to grow more brisk on the right.

Saint Brissac leaned forward and listened. "It will be our turn soon," he said, and, leaning over, he held out a black-sealed package to Sargent. "If I don't come back, Joe," he asked, "will you deliver this in person?"

Sargent nodded, and put the envelope away. In the nervous, excited throng he was the coolest man present. His training in the desert, where, of all places,

patience is a virtue, now stood him in good stead. While other men jumped on and off their horses, he sat so perfectly still and apparently unmoved that the veteran color-bearer said to him:

"You have seen much service, monsieur?"

"It is my first battle," Joe answered, quietly.

"Well, young man," the other replied, "my compliments to you! You will go far. It seems hardly right to intrust the flag to a foreigner, but, if I fall, you take it. There isn't a man of your size in the regiment."

Suddenly, shrill and clear, the bugle sounded the *Garde-à-vous*, and a tremor shook the two regiments. The swearing and grumbling ceased, and a dead silence seemed to fall on the ranks. The men swung themselves into the saddle, reined their horses into line, and waited. A few officers galloped along the front, an order passed down the line, and the mounted iron-breasted mass moved forward out of the shadow into the sun. As of their own accord the squadrons deployed and again waited. A staff-officer rode down the front and waved his *képi*.

"Boys!" he cried, "the country needs you. You are going to charge. Ahead of you are ten thousand bayonets, glory, and death. Behind you, our shattered right wing. You must save them, cost what it may. Good-by, boys! Go it as your fathers did at Waterloo!"

A voice answered from the ranks, "All right, general! We haven't forgotten how the old fellows charged." The next moment the hoarse cry of *Vive la France!* rang from twelve hundred throats.

And then again there was a pause. Several horsemen wheeled into place in their respective positions. A half-intelligible order rippled through the ranks. The bugle sounded. The lines oscillated, and instinctively the squadrons chose their ground. The front moved ahead, and the long diagonal shrank into column. Then again they halted for a moment, and the first bullets, fired from too great a distance to do any harm, rang against the steel cuirasses with a dull, swinging, melancholy sound.

Saint Brissac reached over and shook Sargent's hand —and they were off. Twelve hundred swords flashed from their scabbards and cast a bar sinister of shadow across the golden shield of the burnished cuirasses; and the long horse-tails streamed out behind the star of light that sat upon each man's helmet.

The ground was very bad—sunken roads between high embankments; stone walls, orchards, and hop-fields, crowded with sharp-shooters. But more terrible than all were the eight batteries of Gunstett, sending their irresistible death ploughs through the gallant galloping mass of cannon-meat. From the right, from the left, from the front, sheets of leaden hail swirled and whisked and whistled and shrieked at them, sinking into the quivering flesh with a dull, sodden sound, puncturing helmet and cuirass alike to deliver their death-message; or, coming aslant, brushing over the keen blades, were shattered into angry, fluid fragments against the bright armor that gave forth a curiously muffled ring. The ranks opened and closed again with that ghastly lozenge-shaped motion that means death or suffering, a tomb or a wound, for each divergence.

And, strange to say, not a human, not a living sound was heard. The rumble of the clattering hoofs, the sombre drumming accompaniment of the musketry, the harsh clang-clanging of the lead pouring in fierce gusts on the advancing line of steel, the deep bass rolling of the heavy guns, drowned all animate sounds. No death-cries were heard; the wounded fell dumb; no horses neighed; no riders yelled. Twelve hundred started; eleven—ten—eight—six—four hundred reached the village. Into it, into it, colors ahead! like a human torrent, the quarters of the horses dancing a staccato death-dance cadence like the crested flow of a rushing stream, rising and falling and disappearing; rising and falling again, and falling, as a torrent, smoothing itself out into a bank of rapids. And at the end of the long, crooked street, suddenly, a barricade and a human whirlpool! From above, from every roof and window and balcony and shutter the death-hail rattles down. And again a lull; a vision of dismounted men tearing away at the dam; and once more released, the stream rushes on with a bound into the great orchard beyond.

In such a race there are no incidents, no personalities. A man is as a drop of water, a human atom whirled along by a rushing current and emptied out beyond, dizzy and half-stunned. Four hundred had reached the village; sixty rode out of it. In his left hand Saint Brissac grasped the flag, in his right a broken sword. Beside him Sargent, whose helmet had been shot off, was binding a handkerchief around his forehead. Six cuirassiers, panting and mostly wounded, sat on their horses behind them; and that was all.

The main body had diverged to the south and left these eight men stranded on a little knoll, a stone's-throw from the road. How they reached it, why they remained on it, not one of them understood.

Sargent looked around and laughed hysterically. "I feel as though I had been through the rapids at Niagara," he said. "How long do you suppose that business lasted, Maurice! Hullo! where did you get that color?"

"I'm sure I couldn't tell you, Joe. Are you hurt?"

"Not to speak of. By Jove! here is my flask full and unbroken. Here's luck for you! Let's have a nip all round; I guess we've earned it. There, that's good; now, what's the next thing to do?"

"*Ma foi, mon capitaine,*" cried out one of the men, "just look around you! there's nothing left but to die!"

"Well," Sargent answered, good-humoredly, "after what we have been through, that don't seem quite as easy as it looks. Come; jump off your horses, boys, and unsling your carbines. There are a couple of dead fellows in that ditch who'll fix us out with cartridges. Why, Maurice, old man, you look played out; what's the matter? There's plenty of fight in us yet. Cheer up, boys! If we've got to die, let us die like good men!"

And here the difference of character of the two men showed itself. In the attack the reckless, dashing young Frenchman led the way, fearless, undaunted, always in the front rank. But now that the battle was lost, and the fight had become a purely defensive one—a pushing away of death as it were—his grip was gone, and

the solid, staying qualities of the New-Englander came out in strong contrast. The men at once recognized him as their leader, and, whether by influence of the brandy or of his cheeriness, they buckled heartily to the task before them. Sargent understood this as well as they, and acted accordingly.

"Tear the silk off that staff, Maurice, and put it inside your jacket. We must not lose the color. Now, boys, look to your arms again; it is time for those pork-eaters to be at us—and here they come, sure enough! Lie low, boys, and aim quietly, each mark his man!"

A moment later a volley crashed over them.

"On to your horses and charge!" Sargent yelled—and it seemed that his words had barely died away before they were back again—three men, Saint Brissac, and Sargent. "My God, Maurice," the latter said, "I haven't a cartridge left."

"Nor I," the other answered, doggedly. The men shared with them, and they waited. They were too weak to charge again, but stood gallantly at bay. Three times the little band repulsed their assailants until all their ammunition was exhausted; and again they waited. The black uniforms were all around them.

Then some hussars came forward and Sargent rode out alone, a bloody handkerchief around his forehead, and his long, straight blade before him. The German officer advanced and gruffly demanded their surrender.

"Come and take us!" was the quiet answer; and Joe urged his horse onward. The soldier laughed and cocked his pistol. "Another step, my friend, and

you are carrion." But Sargent still moved towards him. Sabre and pistol flashed at the same moment; and Joe disengaged himself from his fallen horse, the hussar dropped out of his saddle on to the grass, and the little band cheered, as even desperate men will do when they see a brave deed nobly done. Even the Germans seemed ashamed to attack again. After a few moments of deliberation another officer rode forward, with a handkerchief on the end of his sword, and Sargent met him half-way.

"Will you surrender?" he asked, courteously. "You have done all that brave men can do. You know the laws of war—we shall have to close in on you, and if you do not surrender . . . well, you know what must happen as well as I do. . . . Think on it a moment, sir. You have no ammunition, no chance of escape. You are alone in the midst of our army. Surrender is the only course open to you."

Sargent glanced around, and, to his amazement, he saw the four cuirassiers mounted and in line, erect as on parade. Three of them held their broken swords, presenting arms. A step to the front, his shattered right arm limp by his side, with head thrown back and chest expanded, the bugler was playing the grand old hymn:

"Mourir pour la patrie,
C'est le sort le plus beau,
Le plus digne d'envie. . . ."

And as the notes sprang from the dented instrument, pathetically broken and husky, the men straightened themselves in their saddles. "Perfectly insane!" Sargent said to himself; "but it is devilish fine all the

same;" and, turning to the Prussian officer, he added, with a wave of the hand towards the little group he commanded:

"You see, sir, surrender is out of the question. I must go back to them." The officer raised his cap in token of admiration, and Sargent walked slowly back to his men.

For a moment the enemy seemed embarrassed. Had they been Anglo-Saxons they would have given those five heroes a rousing cheer; but being merely Saxons, the folly of the action outweighed its grandeur. Before the generous officer could prevent it, a last volley was poured into the little clump of human wreckage that had drifted and hung on that fatal knoll. It seemed more like an execution than a fight, and for a few seconds the assailants held back, waiting for the smoke to clear.

By some miracle Sargent had not been touched. Looming up through the mist of smoke they saw his giant figure rise from the grass, on to which he had flung himself, saw him snap his sword across his knee and hurl the fragments at them, watched him bend over the body of his dying friend and raise it with tender care in his mighty arms, as a mother might bear her child, and slowly walk down towards them with his burden, their bloody work.

On either side the ranks parted in solemn silence as he passed between them, and so great was the prestige that enmantled the solitary survivor, that instinctively the officers saluted as he walked down the line to the road. There, unconscious of his surroundings, he turned towards the village. A large body of staff-officers had

gathered on a little eminence near by, whence they had watched the last phases of the fight, and as the big cuirassier passed, bearing in his arms the body of his comrade, the commanding general rode forward.

Without realizing to whom he was speaking, Sargent looked up and asked, in his simple, quiet way, "Can you tell me, sir, where I shall find some water? I am afraid my friend is dying."

There was something so gentle, so absolutely oblivious of self, in the stalwart young fellow's manner, that the veteran's eyes suddenly filled with tears.

"You poor boy," he said, kindly, "he is not dying—he is dead."

"Dead?"

At that moment a burly *Rittmeister* rushed from the ranks and hit Sargent on the shoulder. "You damned French dog of a prisoner," he said, "how dare you speak to a general. Come off here with your carrion."

"*Kreuz Granaten Donner Keil!*" the old general fairly yelled, as he smote the brute across the back with the flat of his sword. "Get back to the ranks, you hound!"

Sargent had not even noticed the incident. "Are you sure, sir, that he is dead?" he asked, in a hopeless, cruelly quiet voice.

The other merely nodded, and side by side they went down the road a little way, without apparent object, while the men made way for them to right and left. Presently they passed a group of sappers, and the sight of their picks and shovels seemed to rouse Sargent from his apathy. He stopped and looked up again.

"May I bury him, sir?" he asked, in the same dull voice.

The general gave some orders, and a few men fell to digging a hole under a gnarled old apple-tree. When they were done, Sargent bent forward and laid his friend down; and they covered him in silence. After it was over he planted the broken sword above his head, and knelt by the rough little mound. He was vaguely conscious of the necessity of a prayer, but for all his efforts he could think of none but the little jingle we have all babbled as children at our mothers' bedside. So, folding his hands, he repeated, slowly, the old familiar verses,

> "Now I lay me down to sleep,
> I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

Then his voice broke, and he stopped. The white-haired old general removed his cap and muttered between his teeth, as the other officers present uncovered at his example, "A strong hand, and a tender heart. If my Fritz had lived I wish he had grown to be like you!" Then there was a long, awkward silence. Sargent rose and looked around. For the first time since the last volley was fired he realized where he was, and recognized the rank of the officer beside him. By way of apology for the liberties he felt he must have taken, he bowed low, then drew himself up.

"General," he said, quietly, "where shall I join my fellow-prisoners?"

IV

A FEW months later Sargent arrived in New York. The long, dreary period of captivity was over, and once more he was a free man; for although he might have availed himself of his commission as staff-officer, and been liberated on parole, he preferred to take his full punishment alongside of the men with whom, as a private, he had ridden, verily, into the jaws of death. At the frontier he opened the sealed package intrusted to him by Saint Brissac just before the charge, and his heart stood still as he read the address of the enclosed letter: "To Miss Edith Thomas." She was the girl he loved, the girl who had rejected him. It was all clear to him then; she had loved Saint Brissac—possibly they were engaged—and of all men in the world he had been chosen for the solemn duty of breaking the news of his friend's death to her. For, of course, the official despatches had never mentioned the names of the two volunteers. "Poor girl," he said to himself, and laughed. "She wrecked my happiness, and now I am obliged to do the same to her. It is indeed a bitter world."

The steamer arrived in the morning, and he called in the afternoon. As he walked up Fifth Avenue, none of his former friends recognized him, for indeed he had grown very brown and gaunt during the long months of privation when he worked as a day-laborer

in the German prison. Then the broad scar across his forehead had changed the frank, boyish expression of his face, so that, although many stared at him in an undecided sort of way, as he made no sign of recognition no one spoke to him.

Miss Thomas was alone, for he had come early, and in the somewhat gloomy, conventional room, furnished according to the most expensive New York taste, Sargent felt ill at ease. It was as though the prison walls he had barely left again enclosed him. They shook hands rather stiffly, and Joe retreated to the mantelpiece; from there he could retreat no further and must advance.

"And where have you been, pray, during the last year, Mr. Sargent?" she asked, with an assumption of light-heartedness.

"On a serious errand, Miss Thomas," he answered, much embarrassed. "I was in France with M. de Saint Brissac during the campaign; and—and afterwards, alone . . . in Germany, a prisoner. And . . . please take this; . . . he gave it to me just before the charge where . . . where we were all killed . . . I mean—" Then he handed the letter to her, strode to the window, and mopped his forehead with his handkerchief.

A few minutes passed in silence before she called to him.

Apparently she had not moved; he glanced up furtively at her face and saw that she had been weeping.

"Tell me about it," she said, gently, holding the letter in her clasped hands. And the poor boy did. He told how Saint Brissac had left at once for France on receipt of the bad news; of his energy in Paris; of his

suffering at the disaster which he felt must overwhelm his country; of his valiant charge, always in the front rank; of his gay and gallant behavior throughout; of his brave death; of his poetically simple funeral before the enemy's host. He glorified his friend, and in doing so before the woman he believed that friend had loved, he grew enthusiastic and eloquent. While he talked he did not dare look up at her, but he heard her sobbing softly, and his heart yearned with sympathy for her and bled with grief for his brilliant friend—for he remembered now—ah, so distinctly! that last glimpse of him, erect and undaunted in the face of death.

But when he had finished a horrible feeling of nothingness came over him. His last duty was done, and life seemed to him like a deserted race-course.

"Well," he said, rising after a pause, "I think I must go," and he looked up.

The girl had also risen from her chair and was holding Maurice's letter towards him.

"Am I to read it?" he asked. "Thank you."

It was short, but characteristic, and ran thus:

"MADEMOISELLE,—I regret that our very slight and formal acquaintance compels me to apologize for the liberty of addressing you. Nor would I dare, mademoiselle, to do so were it not for the knowledge that if this letter reaches your hands I shall no longer be of this world. I intrust it to one of the bravest, the noblest, the most unselfish, the most loving of men—my friend, Joe Sargent. Ah, mademoiselle, can I say more? May your noble heart teach you to read between the lines of your admiring and devoted servant,

"CHARLES MAURICE,
"Comte de Saint Brissac."

"Why . . . but what does it all mean?" Sargent ex-

claimed, as he looked up from the paper at the graceful girl before him. "I thought he . . . you. . . ."

"Ah, Joe!" she interrupted, blushing bewitchingly, and smiling at him through her tears. "Joe, can't *you* read between the lines?"

JULIUS: A WAITER

JULIUS: A WAITER

THE day had proved unproductive; although I knew what I wished to say, and even, in a vague way, how I wished to say it, the appropriate words did not suggest themselves. My books likewise failed to give me any help; and finally, wearied by my sterile efforts, I took my hat and went out. On the Common I met my friend P——, the writer, and we walked along together to the end of the board walk; he had just finished Tolstoï's "La Mort," which I had also read, and wished to talk it over with some one; so he proposed that I should accompany him to the club of which he was a member, and where we could enjoy a simple dinner and a quiet talk.

"Not the least important thing that we learn from his books," P—— began, as we went into the smoking-room, and continuing his discourse on Tolstoï, "is that the apparently most commonplace incidents of real life may, and often do, possess considerable human—I might even say dramatic—interest. Unfortunately, we do not know *how* to look at things. We see a man's head, his hands, and feet; note the color of his eyes, and form an impression that he is commonplace and uninteresting; we describe him on paper by these characteristics, and produce a commonplace, uninteresting figure, which you of the romantic school declare to be

—and often rightly—a mere photograph, and an uninteresting one at that. If your objection is well-founded, it means merely that we lack talent, not that our principle is wrong. 'Nihil humanum a me alienum puto.' But this semi-barbarian examines his subjects more patiently, more lovingly. He does not go out of his way to invent something or somebody which he knows he will never see in this world, and consequently how truly human are his men and women! and how well we know them when we lay down the book! I have to thank him for teaching me to discover much of real interest where I believed that I knew the ground well and that it was barren. And *à propos* of this, let me read you a few notes which I have here, and mean to work into my next book. You are sure it will not bore you?"

I, of course, answered that that was impossible, and P—— read me the following fragment:

"His name was Julius, simply. To the postman and at the registrar's office he may possibly have been known by some more individual name, but to the world in which he lived he was 'Julius the waiter.' He was a short, heavy man with a large, round head, and an honest German face that you remembered when you looked at it, and forgot again when his back was turned and you could see only the rounded folds of skin showing through his close-cut hair, or the ragged ends of his tawny mustache. He seemed to have been born in the shell-jacket, white apron, and broad-soled shoes which revealed his social position; the glasses or dishes which he spent his life moving and removing from the tables seemed as much a part of his hands as were his square-

chipped finger-nails; and one was again impressed with the thoughtful providence of nature that had placed a pencil behind his ear. It was as difficult to imagine him without these attributes of his profession as it was to think of him in any other than his professional capacity. If the question had been asked of any of the men whom he served daily whether Julius were a man, he would probably have answered, unhesitatingly and in a tone of some astonishment, 'No; he is a waiter.' And yet Julius was as much a man, even if one of a different kind, as those on whom he waited.

"Forty years before, he had gladdened a suffering woman's heart as she lay exhausted, yet happy, in a modest countryman's house in the overcrowded Rhineland. His world, which at first had been limited to one room, gradually expanded into the house, then into the village, and finally into the fields, which he helped his father to cultivate. Until the time when the difficulty of supporting a family by farming obliged his parents to emigrate, his education was the same sound, simple, sensible one that all boys receive in the Rhine country. He learned to read, write, and put the rules of arithmetic to practical application, and this part of his learning he never forgot. Certain rudimentary notions of the geography and history of the world in general, and of his own Vaterland in particular, he committed to memory in a condensed form; but the greater part of these he left in the school-house, where they belonged; so that on reaching New York he discovered that if, on the one hand, he had much to learn, he had, on the other, little to forget; and in this new country that gave him a great advantage over his father.

"His complete ignorance of English naturally limited the field of his search for employment, and eventually he found a place as waiter in a small German beer-saloon in the Bowery. For a long time, sprightly in the morning and weary at night, he drew beer, washed glasses, wiped tables, and listened to the somewhat unclassical language into which German is apt to develop under the influence of Bowery grammarians. As his boss prospered and the saloon expanded he passed through the various stages characterized by the anonymous '*du*' or 'boy,' the patronizing 'Jule,' the authoritative or expostulating '*Kellner*,' and finally the more respectful 'Julius,' of the patrons of the establishment; and as he grew in importance his work increased proportionately, until it did not seem possible for one man to attend to it in a day.

"During a period of several years the individual in Julius gradually receded before the instrument. From the moment when, early in the morning, he sanded the floor and cleaned up the gathered dirt of the preceding day, to the time when, half-unconscious with sleep, he closed for the night, Julius only asserted himself through his occupations. Even eating and drinking had become a mechanical side-play, as it were, of the daily performance. He could not have told when he went to sleep, nor when he had been allowed to sleep as long as he wished and really needed. His will had become subordinated to the requirements of the guests, as his thoughts were to the opinions expressed in the daily papers, of which, if they contradicted one another, the last read was the best. Excepting in so far as the interests of the house were concerned, he accepted

the outspoken theories of the consumers, with but just sufficient hesitation to insure their repetition in more forcible terms; and he learned to gauge the relative importance of his patrons according to the duly paid quantity of solids and liquids which passed through his hands. At monthly recurring dates he left the perpetually gas-lighted saloon for an evening, which usually developed into a night of attempted intimacy with what he called, and believed to be, the world. But what with sleep, and the equally soothing influence of unrecorded potations, the remembrance of what he had seen in the 'world' was never very distinct, even on the following day; and the engrossing duties of his position left him little leisure to string together such fragmentary impressions as he might have recalled into anything like an appreciable whole.

"After several years of this existence Julius fell ill, as was to be expected, and, having become a factor of considerable importance in the economy of the establishment, the proprietor took him into his own family, and intrusted him to the care of his wife and daughter. During the long weeks of his convalescence, Julius, for the first time since his arrival in America, had leisure to realize how lonely and how unselfish his previous life had been. After this protracted period of enforced silence nature spoke, and, with the license conceded to convalescents, she spoke peremptorily. Julius loved. He had of a sudden understood that life without a wife was not worth living; and as there were no serious objections to be considered, he soon after married the daughter of his employer.

"Julius's convictions were not the outgrowth of any

process of intellectual development. He went to sleep without any, and awoke the next morning to find the question definitely settled in his own mind. Reasons he had none to give; consequently, argument could not move him. He knew that he was right, simply because he felt that he was right, and to him that seemed sufficient. The first year of his married life was to him a tremendous one. As heretofore, he remained a waiter during the day, but at night, when his work was over, he became a man; so there were two Juliuses occupying the same earthly tenement, and, like Box and Cox, they never interfered with each other. When he became a father, a third and new Julius came into existence, and for a little time these three-part individuals were able to live together, if without harmony, at least without discord. But this could not last long. One morning the father interfered with the waiter, and suddenly the trinity of Juliuses collapsed, leaving him a very perplexed man. He did not attempt to understand these crises of sudden evolution, during which he moved up with one step, as it were, the whole distance which he should have passed over by degrees, but, as usual, waited for some simple inspiration. Of the internal machinery by which the problems of his life were solved he professed to know nothing; so he waited patiently and passively.

"One morning he awoke with the conviction that it was no longer proper for him to fill the two positions of son-in-law and waiter in the same establishment; and an hour later, by the same process of unconscious cerebration, he had reached the conclusion that he must leave New York and go to Boston. Possibly he felt

that to accept employment elsewhere in New York would mean merely a repetition of the life which he had led so long, and which he now hated, and that would have accounted for his desire to leave the place; but he had chosen Boston, where he had neither friends nor relatives, as a child might suddenly wish to go to Greenland or South Africa, indifferently, merely because it was tired of remaining in the house. And this was characteristic of the man.

"For a few months Julius found temporary employment in a modest restaurant patronized by college men and such of the mildly Bohemian element in Boston as does not belong to any club, and here he discovered that he had one ambitious longing. He wished to become a club waiter. It so happened that about this time a small dining-club was being organized among young artists and professional men of modest means, and Julius, having applied for the position of senior waiter, was made happy at last. Here it was that he completed his evolution into *Julius the waiter*.

"Here he had an opportunity of seeing and listening to a class of men whose very existence he had hitherto not suspected. Here, for the first time, he waited on gentlemen, and saw them as they are among themselves when no restraining influence of conventionality is present. He heard good speeches, good music, and on certain occasions saw good painting. Heretofore these things had existed for him only as the headings of newspaper paragraphs, and his taste, if one may use this word to describe the appreciation of an untutored, unprejudiced nature, had not been vitiated by

the poison of such low art as is unfortunately rightly believed to appeal to the lower classes. Instinctively, Julius liked what was good and simple; his criticism—purely one of feeling—was unconscious, and usually remained unexpressed. On the whole, he was absolutely and perfectly happy. The club became the object of his life, and little by little he came to believe that it belonged to him, or at least that he was an essential element of its existence. All the facts of its history fixed themselves in his memory without conscious effort on his part, and remained written there as clearly as on the books. He knew the tastes of the individual members, and without ever making any mistakes he brought them what they liked, and omitted to bring what each disliked; and this he did half unconsciously, as naturally as he ate, drank, or breathed. In a word, he identified himself with the institution, spoke of it in the first person plural, and as long as he was within its doors forgot that he had any distinct individuality of his own.

"The pet alligator and the spotted, pink-nosed cat, born and raised in the club kitchen, became as important factors in the life of Julius the waiter as were his own children in the life of Julius the man. On crowded occasions, when it became necessary to introduce other helpers, he became so jealous of these that he would only allow them to help indirectly, and as far as was possible he prevented their coming into direct contact with the club members—a privilege which he considered exclusively his own, and to maintain which he contrived to do the work of three ordinary men. As time went on he took upon himself the performance

of one duty after another, and attended to everything personally, from the cleaning-up in the morning to the posting of the account books late at night. He learned to understand French and Italian as only a German-born waiter does understand these languages; and without ever being familiar, he put himself on a familiar footing with the clubmen, who had come to look upon him as a species of member, constituting a class by himself. A few, looking deeper than the rest, had discovered the man beneath the mask of the waiter, and to these he would sometimes relate the vague recollections of his former life, really pleased and perhaps somewhat astonished to be treated for a moment like a man instead of as a thing that came forward at the touch of a bell, obeyed an order, and went back again into the backroom to snatch a little sleep before the next call. But, speaking generally, Julius was only a waiter.

"On certain occasions, however, the mask fell, and then Julius again took his place in the human family. His eldest boy, of whom he was rightly proud, fell ill, and on the same day on which the doctor told him that there was but little hope of his recovery he received a letter from New York with the news that his aged father was dying. Julius did not complain; his sound common-sense told him that he could do nothing better than wait and endure; so he endured, and continued waiting, as usual. Only a few of the members knew of his trouble, and the majority probably attributed the bleariness of his eyes and his broken voice to a temporary abuse of the cellar keys which were intrusted to his keeping. As usual, he brought cigars

and spirits, wrote out his checks, and attended to his table.

"On that very day the club was giving a supper to some famous foreign actor, and a supper would not be possible without the help of Julius. He knew this, and did not ask for leave of absence, which, he thought, would have been treasonable to his club. During the afternoon, one of the three or four members to whom he sometimes talked about himself came into the club for a few minutes, and Julius followed him into the cloak-room to show him a photograph of the sick child. His manner as he did this was somewhat embarrassed, as if he felt that he ought to apologize for the liberty which he was taking; yet at the same time he could not repress a feeling of pride at being the father of such a boy.

"'He is a nice bright boy, Mr. D——,' he said. 'He's six years old now, and just *as* smart! Oh, he's a splendid little fellow, and the doctor says he's stood it like a little major. We didn't have time to get no more than one of them finished. That's a nice photograph, isn't it, Mr. D——?' Then he turned quickly and went out of the room.

"During the supper Julius tried hard to remember that he was only a waiter; but, notwithstanding his effort, he could not altogether forget the little bed a few blocks away where the boy was lying, and in spite of himself his eyes betrayed his feelings. When the president rose and made a humorous speech, Julius laughed with the rest; but sometimes his laugh was slightly hysterical, and sounded like a sob—only to himself, of course, for no one else was thinking of the

boy or of the old man. And a little later, when the guest of the evening gave utterance in somewhat sentimental words to his feelings of gratitude at his kind reception in America, Julius broke down, and went out into the hall. He sat down on the window-sill and looked up at the clock opposite. 'It must be settled now,' he thought to himself. 'The doctor said he would know one way or the other to-night. Perhaps it's all right and the little fellow's coming round.' Unconsciously he smiled and joined his hands, in which he held the ends of his napkin. Then he fancied that he saw the little thing lying quiet and white on the tumbled bedclothes, and tears came into his eyes.

"'What are you doing there, Julius?' the steward cried out to him, angrily. 'Come in here and attend to your work. Come, come, hurry!' So Julius went back to hand cigars and coffee and take orders for liqueurs. When the guests went into the reception-room upstairs, he followed them with the punch-bowl, and stood in the doorway listening to the music and singing; and for a little while he forgot his trouble, until the famous actor began to recite a simple, pathetic story of country life, and once more Julius was unable to control his feelings. He took off his apron, and, without stopping for a hat, ran away home. It was not decided yet; the doctor could not tell until to-morrow. So he returned to the deserted club-rooms and washed dishes throughout the night in the dimly lighted kitchen.

"In time the old man died, and the child recovered. Julius forgot his sorrow and continued as usual to wait on the clubmen, store away facts, and post his books;

and until the day of his death he will probably remain at the club as Julius the waiter."

"Of course," P—— said, gathering his papers and clapping his hands for fresh cigars, "this life is incomplete, but the remainder of it is a foregone conclusion. With these premises it cannot be otherwise. You see, an honest realistic writer is the slave of his characters, for by the time he has written the first half of his book they have already dictated the second, and he cannot change a page of it."

When the waiter had gone out I turned to P——, who seemed to expect an answer, and said: "I like that fragment of yours very well, but I did not expect you to treat it in that way. It seems to me that you have done just what you reprove in romantic writing. You have taken for your subject an ideal exceptional waiter, whom probably neither you nor I will ever meet. Look at this very man who has just brought us the cigars; what could you find that was interesting in him? He seems to me much more typical of his class than your Julius."

P—— interrupted me, smiling. "My dear fellow," he said, "he *is* my Julius. What I have read to you is merely a sketch of his life—not such as he has told it to me, of course, but such as, from the facts he gave me, it really must have been. Your patient can only tell the doctor crudely what he feels; it is for the latter to see and understand what the symptoms mean, and how the malady developed itself. I have known Julius for a long time, and I believed that I knew of him all that there was to know. It is but a little while

ago that I learned to see what had hitherto escaped my attention, and I firmly believe that in every human being's life there is something to move and interest his fellow-men—if you know how to look for it and how to interpret it. That, of course, is the problem which the writer must solve."

HAND-CAR 412, C. P. R.

(ON THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY)

HAND-CAR 412, C. P. R.

(ON THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY)

FOR the last hour the construction train had been travelling slowly; for a whole hour it had cautiously stumbled over the loosened fish-plates with a monotonous chuggety-chug, chunkety-chunk, that had long ceased to awaken any interest, sympathetic or otherwise, in our drowsy minds. Finally it stopped altogether with a jerk, as if it had suddenly but conclusively realized the vanity of any further effort. The astonished cars pulled at their pins and pounded their buffers as if in angry expostulation at this freak of the locomotive, and some of the men offered energetic advice to the Deity as to what ultimate course to pursue with the management of the road in general and the long freight-links in particular. "Can't help it, can't help it!" said the brakeman, as he came along the top of the box-car ahead. "The rails have spread, and it'll be two hours, may be three, before we start her up again."

But the time passed, the train still waited, and we began to grumble stoutly, wondering why, in the name of various places and things, they chose to dally in such a dismal, God-forsaken spot. It was raining at Rat

Crossing; in fact, it had been raining slowly, steadily, for two days with a certain desperate pertinacity. There had been no previous drought to render such an abundance of water desirable; in the country through which we passed we had noticed no fields of parched wheat, no withering trees, no drooping vegetables, no thirsty cattle, no travelled roads on which the dust required laying. On the contrary, the lakes were all full to overflowing, the rivers swollen, the ravines drowned, the swamps soaked, and the tanks so full that the relief-pipes poured forth a continuous stream of spattering expostulation.

Notwithstanding this lavish excess of water, the air seemed no fresher than before the storm, when the thermometer in the caboose registered ninety-seven degrees on the shady side of the track. Both front and side doors were wide open, and some of the boys, in a vain endeavor to produce a passing sensation of freshness, sat down in the semi-fluid puddles, covered with a film of cinders, and dangled their legs in the pour outside. But to no purpose; the air was dead, the water warm, and we continued to stifle and growl.

The view from the car was not interesting. To the left, as far as we could see through the endless, unfolding curtain of rain, a dismal muskeg swamp stretched away to the south of the track, broken only by rare clumps of ragged tamarack. Both slopes of the bank were covered by long beds of pink fire-weed, varied with patches of soggy pigeon-grass, and to the north lay the desolate waste of *brulé* through which we had been travelling for interminable hours. Here and there among the shiny black poles of the burned trees little

bunches of "popples" rustled their loose leaves with a nervous activity that seemed out of place in the dead quiet of their surroundings; and their silly, feeble fluttering, like the barking of a frightened cur, was so exasperating that we could scarcely refrain from throwing a stone at the shivering things and calling out: "Oh, shut up!"

The underbrush was thin, and the ridges of pink gneiss, banded with black, thrust their bare, smooth surfaces through the mottled moss like great pock-marked shoulders of giants protruding from their tattered shirts; in the gullies between them the water gurgled dismally below the tangle of dead trees, and ran away under glossy pigeon-berry leaves, on to which the grotesque pitcher-plants, opening wide their lids, poured their surplus water. Save by the patter of the rain on the car-top and the pish-pishing of the engine blowing off steam, the silence was absolute, and rendered only more profound by the booming crash of a falling tree. Nothing moved but the crazy poplar-trees, and once more we marvelled at the recklessness of the men who had built a railroad through this dead, barren wilderness, where there was nothing but rock, water, and burned timber.

Besides our party of engineers, detailed on remeasurement work, there were two strangers in the car: they had blank passes from the chief, and were going West. As they kept to themselves, talking together most of the time and not seeming to care for our company, we had paid no especial attention to them. Every man of us, however, turned suddenly as the younger of the two, speaking excitedly in a loud, swaggering

tone, intensified by a strong twang, said to his companion:

"I tell you, Morton, that man Matt Murphy was the biggest coward that ever walked this earth; now don't you forget it!"

The intonation of the man's voice was so vicious, so mean, that we all felt convinced that the statement was false, and, although utterly ignorant of the facts, each of us felt an instinctive desire to contradict him. But before any one could think of what to say, a deep voice from the end of the car condensed our feelings in the energetic and laconic answer,

"That's a —— lie!"

The speaker, Jack Collins, was the quietest man on the staff, and had acquired a certain reputation for minding nobody's business but his own. Jack was somewhat of an enigma to us all; we did not understand, but we all liked him, for he had a way of doing small charities and helping the boys in a pinch that showed a truly good nature and a warm heart. What his exact work was none of us knew: he had the name of being a good locater and explorer, especially among the older men, with whom he usually associated. His reports never passed through our office, and no complaints were ever made about the irregularity of his work; he always went off before office-hours with his compass and note-book, but the men not infrequently found him lying in a secluded corner reading, or sleeping with his book beside him. He was a large, powerful fellow, with a heavy beard that concealed half his face, of which the only remarkable features were a strong, determined mouth and long, slanting black eyes that

kept moving slowly round from left to right, and suddenly jumped back to their starting-point. Sometimes, when we pressed him very hard, he told us a story or some adventure which had happened to him, and it was only then that his eyes were at rest, void of expression, as if he were reading from some far-away book. He spoke slowly but well, in a low, even voice that commanded the attention of his hearers; we never questioned the truth of his stories, and whenever any statement seemed a trifle extravagant we acknowledged that it must be our fault if we could not understand the circumstances.

For a moment after his unusually emphatic denial no one spoke. The stranger had risen at once, but, seeing that Jack did not move, he sat down again, filled a fresh pipe, and waited. Jack was sitting on the floor at the end of the car, looking down pensively at the revolver that hung from his belt; after a short pause he looked up at the ceiling, and in his usual slow way he told us the story of Matt Murphy's last work on the road.

It had happened two years before; Murphy was then road-master at Campbell's Point, and, far from being thought a coward, he was looked upon as the only man on the line who had pluck enough to run a snow-plough at the head of five engines into a choked cut, and stand firm when every plank fairly quivered under the strain. One day, while he was dozing in his office—for Matt was lazy when he had nothing to do—the door opened with a bang, and the operator, in a state of breathless excitement, ran into the room.

"There's a bush-fire below the long bridge, Mr. Mur-

phy," he called out; "the wind is this way, and the Pacific Emigrant is due in an hour. What the devil shall we do?"

Matt started in his chair and repeated the man's words in a dazed sort of way. "Bush-fire—and they are due in an hour. My God!" Then he got up, staggered across the room, and leaned against the wall. The baggage-master, who had overheard, stepped in from the adjoining office, and the operator, with a shrug of his shoulders, turned to him and said, in a perplexed way:

"Murphy's drunk, as usual. What's to be done?"

"Drunk, you blamed idiot!" cried Nolan, indignantly; "his wife and kids are on that train. Get out of here, you scented squirrel, and blamed quick, too, or I'll make your empty head so blessed sore you couldn't see daylight through a ladder! Say, Matt, old man—" He did not finish his sentence, for the next moment Murphy pushed him aside and sprang out on the platform, where the men were collecting to hear the news.

"Boys," he cried, in a voice that seemed to rasp in his throat—"boys, look a-here! I want three good men to go to hell with me! Haul up a pumper—412! catch a hold there; now heave away—so! Drop her on the track—that's it! Slap on the oil, you fellows. Two hundred lives! My God!" he continued, as if thinking aloud. "Quick, blame you! off with your shirts, and hurry! all aboard! That's the style; now come along, boys, and *work!*"

He was the first on the car and took the rear handle behind the brake; Long Mike, the Finlander, Jim Reeves, and "Dumb Dick" jumped on after him; an

oil-can, a monkey-wrench, and an axe were thrown on; the men gave them a shove to start, and away they went down the long grade, fifteen miles an hour.

Instinctively—for they merely knew that there was a fire below the bridge and that the train was soon due—instinctively Murphy's three companions had understood what they had before them. They were all old hands and knew that this was a desperate venture, a forlorn-hope, and that their only chances of success lay in their working well together, each man doing his duty absolutely, regardless of what might happen. But all this they felt rather than reasoned, for men of action reflect slowly, and the pace was so severe that they had no time for reflection.

Matt leaned over and slipped the key of the switch to Jim Reeves, who was in front.

"If we haven't time to unlock her, Jim," he said, so quietly that it hurt the men to hear him, "jump on the lever and break the chain. Now, fellows, heave away for all you're worth!"

The first six miles passed quickly; to right and left the road and the trees flew backwards, and nothing was heard but the short, quick panting of the men, the burr of the cogs, and the clickety-click, clickety-clink of the wheels over the fish-plates. On the half-mile up-grade to Bass's Falls they had to slacken up a little and hang on the handles, while the sweat ran off their smooth backs down over their muscular arms to the crossbar, and dripped on to the platform; but with their heads down and every muscle braced, they worked on steadily, panting hoarsely through their closed teeth. They had but one idea in common, and that was, as

Jim Reeves tersely expressed it, that they must reach that qualified switch or bust. At regular intervals Murphy, who seemed to have renounced his customary profanity, repeated his short, earnest exhortation, more as a prayer than as a command: "Steady, boys, steady! for God's sake!"

The top of the grade was reached; then came a level run of two miles before the curve to the bridge. Ahead of them on each side of the track the workmen, apprehending some disaster from the enormous volume of smoke that was blowing towards them in purplish clouds, rimmed with golden sunlight, had assembled before the Falls station; and as Murphy's gang came along, up and down, up and down, every man in that crowd felt his eyes grow moist and his throat dry. With one accord English and Yankee, French-Canadians and Italians, Swedes and Finlanders, gave one solitary ringing cheer, and stood silent again, as if suddenly awed by the simple heroism of these four men, apparently rushing consciously, determinedly, to certain death, and working fiercely as if they were escaping from some great danger instead of hurrying into it. Not a man spoke as they flashed past. A few pushed their hats back and stopped as if ashamed of the movement, watching the hand-car grow smaller and smaller above the converging lines of the rails.

Swearing Dan Dunn, the walking boss, stepped out into the middle of the track between his men, threw down his pick, and wiped his wet forehead on the sleeve of his shirt.

"Boys," he said, "that gang's a-goin' to everlastin' destruction as plucky as any fellows I ever see, every

blamed man of them; and I'll bet a barrel of high-wines to a cup of tea they know it, too. Matt Murphy knows it, sure." Then, turning suddenly and pointing down the track, he cried, in his usual, bullying tone:

"Give them a yell there, blame you!—all together now, and yell till you bust, or I'll break the son of a tadger's head that hangs fire!"

For once, although they had their customary effect of insuring prompt compliance with his orders, Dan's threats were superfluous; for once his wishes coincided with the wishes of his men, and from those five hundred throats there burst such a cry that the flames ahead seemed to halt for a moment in their forward rush. On the hot, pulsating air it floated away across the muskeg, over the heads of the devoted crew, and re-echoed with a booming roll from the slate walls of the rock cut, through which they had pushed their car. But though this expression of their comrades' sympathy cheered and helped them, it told each man only too plainly that this was his last job on the track.

"That's good-by for the long contract," said Reeves; and Mike, in his broken English, repeated:

"Yas! Koot-py, pyes—koot-py!" but both relapsed into silence at the sound of Murphy's quiet remonstrance.

"Steady, boys, steady! and mind the brake, Jim; we're right on the down-grade."

At the end of the level was the grade to the bridge and the fire; beyond the fire the bridge, the switch, and the fated train with its human cargo hurrying to destruction, for the wind was high, and the engineer

would naturally think the fire far away until he was in the very midst of it. Then the struggle began. The smoke ran along the embankment towards them in great flying gusts, so dense they could barely see the platform of the car; the heat became intense, but they never wavered. Perhaps it was because women were few in the dismal country which had become their home, and that, as is usual in purely male communities, every man invested the gentler sex collectively with a romantic halo, in exact inverse proportion to the profane sceptical contempt which he professed for them individually; perhaps it was because some lingering spark of chivalry, driven into the West by the sneers of a higher civilization, had flamed up suddenly in the hearts of these rough journeymen; or perhaps it was merely the humane hope of saving the wives and children of men who had slept under the same blanket, worked in the same ditch, and shared the same biscuit;—but, whatever the cause, it was sufficient to silence selfish consideration and make them look upon the sacrifice of their lives as no more than the fulfilment of a necessary duty.

All around them the trees were falling in rows; broad flashes of flame, quenched for a moment in the black smoke, burst up and flared in the wind like shreds of some vast tattered canopy. Along the ground the brush wilted away, burning with a sharp crackle like that of a musketry discharge; and up through the hollow tamaracks the fire swept with a noise like the bellow of a filling sail. Great trunks tottered and fell with a booming crash like the sound of distant cannon. The hot air quivered around them, and they

gasped spasmodically as they shook off the burning sparks, and laughed hysterically between short howls of pain. Ahead all was red and black, a sea of fire. Murphy called out once more, "Steady, boys, steady!" and they plunged into it resolutely, with the desperation of a wounded bull charging on the espada's blade.

"Steady, my men! up and down, up and down! Stick to her, lads; it'll soon be over now."

Then the flames closed upon them, and as they lowered their heads before the whirlwind of fire and smoke that was hurled at them, they shivered at the crisp crepitation of their hair and beard, and felt the hot grip of the fire fasten on them as they writhed in pain. Something struck the car and it reeled for a moment.

"Stand by her, boys; steady there!" They grasped the handles again and struggled on; by the hollow sound of the wheels they knew that they were on the bridge at last, and it lent them fresh strength. Then something struck them again. "Hard, hard at work there! Jim, Mike, Dick, all of you!—pump away, for God's sake, boys! we are nearly there. Try again! the switch, boys, mind the switch! all together now, heave!" But strain as they might—and they strained with a fierce, desperate energy, for there was something in Murphy's tone that went to their hearts—the car was fast and would not move. Then they heard a wild cry above the thundering crash of the bridge as it fell from under them; the car was suddenly shot ahead and sprang away easily over the débris that lay across the iron. The trestle was passed; but at the rear han-

dle Mike stood alone; his partner, Matt Murphy, was gone. That last falling brace had struck him squarely across the arms; and when he saw that he could no longer pull his weight, he jumped off and put all his remaining strength in that last push that sent them through into the comparative quiet beyond.

"Steady, boys, and God be with you!" came once more from out the chaos of flames behind them, and that was all. On the other side, beyond the clay cut, they heard the bellowing whistle of the engine; a few more strokes, and they reached the switch.

"Jump, Jim! for God's sake, jump quick!" The next moment the train swept round the curve over the frog and glided smoothly down the siding, where it stopped; but the hand-car had disappeared.

When they came back they found Jim Reeves's body by the broken lever of the switch; Long Mike, too, they picked up beside him, with a shattered leg and an ugly gash across the forehead, while on the other side of the track "Dumb Dick" was clutching the broken handle of the hand-car and sobbing like a child. Strong men lifted their crushed bodies with tender care, and side by side they laid them on a bed of fragant balsam boughs; a woman's light hand wiped away the blood from Mike's rough face, and held moist linen to his bleeding brow. Soon he opened his eyes and looked solemnly, with a puzzled expression, into the anxious faces of the women and children that stood around him, silently watching for his recovery. Then he remembered all; for a moment a bright smile lit up his plain features and died away slowly as he caught sight of his companions stretched beside him. Com-

ing through the distant smoke, the rays of the red evening sun touched their pale faces with a ruddy glow, and wove a soft golden halo around their passive heads. With a slight quiver Long Mike passed away in the sunset silence to join his comrades.

When Jack finished there was a pause; then we all looked up at him with the same question on our lips. He rose slowly from the corner in which he had been sitting. "You want to know where I heard all this?" he asked. "Oh! I am 'Dumb Dick.' To be frank with you, boys, I have been a special detective on the C. P. R. for several years; and if I tell you so now it is because my contract is up as soon as I have handcuffed Mr. James Bowles over there. Don't you move!" he called out, covering him with his revolver. "I suppose," he continued, addressing the man he had called Bowles, "that it would have been more correct to chain you first and tell my story afterwards; but I knew you could not give me the slip. That man, boys, was Murphy's partner in a contract on this road, and tried to get him to swindle the company. Matt wouldn't do it, and threatened to show him up; and now that he's dead this fellow takes his revenge out in attacking his character. However, he's so badly wanted at headquarters just now that he will keep his mouth shut about Murphy for the next ten years."

MISS SARAH'S EXPERIMENT

MISS SARAH'S EXPERIMENT

"Man goes as God pleases."

—*Don Quixote.*

I

ROBERT THORNTON was just going out when the concierge, who took care of his little apartment in the Rue de Lille, opened the door for the postman with the evening mail and the book to sign.

"It is a writing," he said, "not easy to decipher; but in the Americas you do things otherwise than we do in Paris. The letter is for monsieur, is it not?"

The carrier bowed and went out, leaving the concierge standing, cap in hand, in that familiar, cringing attitude of expectancy which, abroad, usually accompanies the delivery of a registered letter. Thornton had already torn the envelope and scattered its contents over the table. There were three small sheets in all. The first, a draft on Drexel, Harjes & Co., he quickly laid aside after glancing at the figures with a feeling of unmingled pleasure and uneasy astonishment. The second was merely a note of a few words in a woman's long, slanting hand—a thin, old-fashioned writing—and ran as follows:

"DEAR ROBERT,—If you will sign the enclosed, I will accept the offer you made to me for the first time twenty-five years ago. Come at once or I may change my mind. . . . SARAH.

"P. S.—I send a draft, to dispose of any possible obstacle to your leaving Paris."

The third sheet he held for a moment in his hand, then placed it, still folded, under a large paper-weight. He knew too well what it must contain. Years ago he would have treated the matter as a joke, and lightly torn the paper into little pieces; but to-day the very sight of it embarrassed him, for he was compelled to admit the effects of that peculiar form of insanity, the periodical . . . disappearance.

"Monsieur has received good news, as I see," the concierge ventured, smiling and moving forward. "Ah, it is a real pleasure to me to bring the good news to monsieur, even if I do not know more than that the news are good; and were you to tell me, I should not be more advanced," he added, philosophically.

"For once you are right, Father Loriot," Thornton answered, good-naturedly. "Here is a piece of a hundred cents for you. Shall I tell him?" he asked himself, spinning the coin into Loriot's cap; and, half involuntarily, he immediately said, aloud: "I am going to be married."

"At your age!" the other ejaculated, bluntly, raising his eyebrows; "Ah! but I beg your pardon, monsieur! I did not wish to say *that*. After all, one marries, or one doesn't marry—as for the rest . . ."

"Come, come!" interrupted Thornton, suddenly annoyed by the remark, for it reminded him that he had discounted his youth, as he had all his other pos-

sessions; "I shall not go out for dinner to-night. Fetch me a pastry from the nearest confectioner's, and a bottle of wine . . . *Romanée.* After that you might bring me a cup of your best coffee."

"As to the coffee, for instance, monsieur shall be satisfied; I promise you it shall be . . ." and he kissed the tips of his fingers expressively as he bowed himself out.

When the door was closed, Thornton sat down to reflect over the situation. His sensations were sufficiently complex to be worthy of analysis, and, occasionally, sufficiently incongruous to provoke a smile. He, Robert Thornton, married! Ha, ha! Well over fifty, usually penniless, slightly *taré*, known to every cabman and ballet-dancer in town, yet too often ignored by quondam friends—true, every word of it—and she knew it, and still cared to marry him! Whew! But, after all, surprising as this might seem at first, what would marriage mean under the circumstances? To-day, Sarah Wyse was no more the Sarah he had courted than was he the Robert of those distant days; and he remembered that yesterday the two neighboring spires were simultaneously chiming to a wedding, and this noon both tolling to a funeral. "You must accept life as it is," he said, sententiously, but with a sly twinkle in his left eye, for the use of the professional sceptic. "Sarah has *not* gone to pieces, whatever I may say about it, and I *have.* It's a bad bargain for her!"

His glass told him a realistic tale; his memory one even less flattering. Devilish little romance or ideal about that! But, bad as he was, or had the reputation of being, he was not quite devoid of conscience, nor was he a dealer in prevarication. His life had been a dismal

failure, and he admitted it frankly, recognizing that he alone was to blame for it and not circumstances, as many a weaker man might have pleaded. He did not entirely regret it; there had been times when he had made of artificial light a very fair substitute for the sun, and he did not scruple to recall them with pleasure. On the whole, he was worth reclaiming; but was his redemption practicable? Sarah Wyse evidently believed it; Thornton doubted.

He did not hesitate to accept her offer, not as being an advantage in a worldly sense, but because, when he was still capable of love, he had loved this woman with all his heart; because, as the years passed on, he had continued to love and admire her, with decreasing strength of feeling, no doubt, but still with all the feeling of which he was capable, call it love or what you may. About their married life there could be no romantic halo excepting such a mild light as memory might shed over it. They would have not much money, and would probably be compelled to live on the old family plantation, in Cuba, now little better than a ruin; and to a man accustomed to the daily fictitious interests of a rather fast, by no means irreproachable, life in European capitals, the change involved great self-denial. Nevertheless, as I said, Thornton did not hesitate.

It was ten years since they had met. In these ten years he had fallen steadily—rapidly, in the estimation of others, still more rapidly in his own. The effrontery under which he concealed his feelings before the world was only skin-deep. In the solitude of his room he recognized just how good and just how bad he was,

and deplored the fatality of a decadence which he appreciated at its exact value, but which he was unable to check. Hitherto there had been no sufficient motive for self-denial; his own family had long since refused to recognize or help him; and, in a somewhat childish way, he nourished the idea of retaliation upon them. If, out of their millions, they could not afford to give him as much as was requisite to live respectably, he would discount the family name, and in this way oblige them to bear their share of the shame (for to him poverty was distinctly a shame). The mistake was as much theirs as his; and, considering that on the one hand two or three thousand a year would make no difference to them, whereas to him it made all the difference between a gentleman and a man who lives upon his wits, their refusal to help him was, under the circumstances, little less than criminal.

And Sarah? Sarah, in a certain way, must be today very much what she was ten or twenty years ago—"Beautiful Sarah Wyse," or, again, "Cruel Sarah Wyse," as some preferred to call her. Thornton rose and walked to the mantelpiece, over which hung a miniature on ivory of "Miss Sarah," and looked at it for a long time. "How well she must know exactly what I am worth!" he said aloud, as he stood holding the portrait to the light.

It was a singular yet beautiful face; the brow of a great lawyer, above which rose heavy waves of fine, black hair, and beneath it the exquisite, delicate features of a very young girl, while between the two extremes the indescribably splendid eyes enabled one to reconcile the severity of the head with the gentleness

of the face—a contrast equally borne out in her character, for she was, at will, a keen-sighted woman of the world or a playful child. It was impossible to feel indifferent towards her; some hated, but many loved, this paradoxical little creature, who did as much evil in this world as she did good. But of the evil that she wrought it should be said that it was done unconsciously, as it were, as if some mischievous elf had assumed control over her mind; indeed, she wrought havoc in a soulless, impersonal way, so masterfully, so boldly, and with such a bubbling-over of fun, such an exuberance of wit revelling in its own spontaneity, that one hesitated to ascribe the responsibility to her personally rather than to some familiar *δαίμων*. She never prepared her mischief; she never struck behind the backs of her victims; the attack was perfectly frank, if cruel, and invited battle on open ground. Nor was it wise to retaliate unguardedly, for no one was ever known to defeat or dismay her.

Of the good she did in this world there is but little known, for she seemed ashamed to do it before witnesses. Yet the great popularity which she unquestionably enjoyed among the poor and among the working-classes would of itself be sufficient proof of the debt they owed her. She was not often kind in manner to any but children; then, indeed, she became a child herself—laughed, played, quarrelled, and kissed, as one of themselves, stopping in her play to turn suddenly on the astonished parents and, making use of the children as a lever, pry them off their pedestal of conceit and self-complacent knowledge. To the women she spoke severely, to the men tauntingly; and

with the former her word rankled until the advice so earnestly, so soundly—nay, even so violently—offered was considered, and its evident value outweighed the resentment that mothers felt at being corrected by one who had no children of her own. With the men it was otherwise; they were dazzled by the beauty and fearlessness of this frail creature, and through these sensuous impressions they remembered the biting words she had spoken. They remembered and pondered them, and eventually—for forgetfulness and lack of consideration are the chief enemies of the working-classes—they recognized that she was right. More than one man, on the verge of the chute down-hill, paused at the top as she warned him back to better ways. Their gratitude was not always delicately expressed, but it was the deeper for its sincerity. I recall, for instance, a visit she made to a brute of a blacksmith, whom her fearless tongue had stung into respectable behavior towards his family; he was in bed, ill of the illness that carried him off, and had sent for her to say: "I always thought, Miss Sarah, that you was a devil in woman's clothes. In my day I've licked every man, woman, and child in this town; then you come along and licked me. I wish you'd a' done it twenty years sooner—why didn't you? Your way ain't what we folks think kindness ought to be, but with money and help and all the visitin' you'd a mind to give us, you couldn't have done half the job you did the day you made me so mad. I wished you was a man and I could pound you to a jelly; that's so, Miss Sarah! I never could hit a woman . . . well . . . yes . . . in the family, but not often . . . so I thought on what you said, and thought on it,

till it came to me what you meant, and, damn me, says I, she's a trump, that little woman is; and by ——, that's just what you are, Miss Sarah, a trump!"

In the hills of Cuba, where well-armed men only dared to venture in bodies, Miss Sarah rode alone. The brigands knew and admired her for her beauty and her pluck. The runaway slaves of former days, as well as the outcasts upon whom crime had been forced by cruel treatment, came out of their hiding-places to greet "Mees Sarrah," and laugh with this little Puck-Titania of their wild ranges. For these outlaws she found kind words, and for their wants her capacious *alforjas** always contained something—never enough to satisfy, but enough to relieve, for that was the fundamental principle of her philosophy of charity.

Thornton recalled all this as he stood gazing at the slightly faded miniature. What would she do with him? If any one was able to redeem him, Miss Sarah was; but . . . how great an undertaking that was, he only knew.

II

A FORTNIGHT later they were married; and on the same day, from the stern of the *Carthagena*, they watched the spires of New York grow smaller and fainter in the golden distance.

"We are a little old, Robert," said Miss Sarah, "to be starting on our honeymoon. What will the future

* Saddle-bags.

say of this day's work? If we are wise now, then we have been great fools for more than twenty-five years; if, on the other hand, we are fools to-day after such a probation, it shows that our wisdom was but a strait-waistcoat we were anxious to throw off. . . . After all, one must *live* a little." She laughed and sang suddenly: "*Oui! vivre, aimer, et mourir!*" . . . but stopped as if frightened. . . . "*Mourir?* oh no, not now! and yet we are going, even as the song has it, to the land where the orange-blossoms blow. Is it too late, Robert . . .?"

"To mend? . . . never!" he answered, half in jest, half earnestly.

"Ah! you have lived up to *that* sentiment, Robert," she retorted, pointedly, "but I believe you would have done better by the 'stitch in time.'"

"Well, well, little woman," he replied, seating himself beside her and taking her hand. "Perhaps it is your own fault that you have no better husband to-day."

"*That* is true enough!" she said, quickly, wilfully mistaking his meaning. "But am I to blame for your being no better than you are?" Then, pretending to shiver, as she saw the ground become dangerous, she added, before he could speak, "How damp it is! Let us go below. Are you going to take good care of me, Robert? A gift for a gift, then, as the French say, and I shall be a devoted nurse to you and *earn* my reward of love," and, tapping his cheek playfully, she looked up into his eyes and smiled. "Come, you shall not take cold. Your hand, my lord!" As they moved forward a sailor sang on deck:

"The moon, the moon, it was red in the west—
Oh-ho ! yo-ho and a-ho ! in the west ;
The laddie his lassie he pressed to his breast—
Oh-ho ! yo-ho and a-ho ! to his breast ;
Bonny moon ! honeymoon !
Oh-ho ! yo-ho ! heave-ho !"

They stopped and listened for a moment, smiled as they looked at each other, and, without speaking, went down the companion-way. It was true; they were married, and, even at their age, there was a honeymoon.

III

Is life worth living on a plantation or a ranch? The noes have it, I think; but there is a minority report to come, though not from Robert Thornton. He had anticipated, and was prepared to undergo, a considerable amount of *ennui*, but the dreary monotony and the isolation of this existence fairly appalled him. He had believed in the beginning that he could learn sufficient Spanish to carry on the business of the estate himself; but after several months of constant, if unproductive, effort, he was obliged to admit that acquiring a new language at fifty is a very different matter from that it was at fifteen. Then, there was really no business to carry on. The whole product was sold to the same firm of commission merchants whose price was fixed for them in London. The supplies, the labor, the whole working of the plantation, were in the hands of a contractor. The administrator's office was, in reality,

but that of the overseer in the old slave-days; and, with the best will in the world, it was impossible for Thornton to stand for hours in the *batey** and yell at the mongrel crowd of negroes and Chinamen that understood neither English nor Spanish.

Moreover, these quondam slaves were different from those he had known as a child in our South. They seemed to him to possess all the disagreeable traits and none of the qualities of the old plantation negro. Nor were they slow to recognize his inutility. In their eyes he was no more than a luxury, a species of pet belonging to Miss Sarah—her body-slave, as it were—and among themselves in the *barrancon*† he was called "Miss Sarah's husband," or, still more simply, "the husband"—a designation that in Catholic countries carries less dignity than we allow that occupation.

Sometimes, in the beginning, Thornton accompanied the *macheteros*‡ to the field, and, lying on a pile of cane-strippings, he watched and listened to the workers. A pretty scene! The morning air is fresh in feeling and fragrance. The gray light on the tall, waving squares of green possesses a peculiar decorative quality of color, lying in broad, flat washes between the heavy, dew-damp outlines. A transparent mist, in which the negroes stand knee-deep, stretches itself sleepily, lazily along the ground, as if nature also were reluctant to begin the day's work. In the east a bar of slate-gray cloud, filled to the rim with molten

* Sugar-yard, where the cane residues are spread to dry in the sun after passing the crushing-rolls.

† Negro-barracks.

‡ Those who use the *machete*, a long pointless chopping-knife.

gold, suddenly cracks and overflows, the yellow streams licking the upper curves before pouring a triumphant tide of light and life over the dead fields. Behind the curtain of cane the steam-whistles of the neighboring *ingenios** each in turn puncture the stillness of the horizon; and a moment later the long, swinging steel blades are ringing clearly, merrily, with an occasional gleam of light through the green mass, now alive with sounds; . . . the rustling hush of the falling cane . . .; the sibilant, whispering noise of the long leaves rent from the stem—a noise that resembles the crisp flurring of wild-geese overhead . . .; the *kerling-clang-chick, kerlang-cling-cut*, of the "chopping into lengths;"† and, behind the falling screen of swaying stems, the barbaric singing of the hurrying harvesters . . . now a hundred voices, low, but rising, rising together . . . now a sudden silence pierced by a single wailing note, answered afar off by one negro, repeated by a second, caught by a third, contrasted, thrown back and passed down again, as were it a lacrosse ball, faster and faster, until the notes, coming closer and closer, are welded together in one great shout . . . swelling, swelling stronger, higher, wilder, until it finally bursts from each expanded chest and throbbing throat into a yell of barbaric ecstasy. There is no echo in the open fields, and the sound ends sharply, while for a moment the steel blades sing alone, *kerling-clang-chick, kerlang-cling-cut* . . .; from down the line the song comes again, now patient and pathetic, now loud and

* Plantations.

† The cane is classified as of *one* cut (or length), *two*, or *three* cuts.

exultant, a joyous spring of melody cut off just before the full climax . . . ; and after a silence, nearly, never quite, the same thing over and over again, a little less spirited, a little less loud, as the sun rises higher in the hard, white sky, until all joy and life are quenched by the heavy noon heat. And the morning's work is done.

Amidst all this activity, Thornton alone had accomplished nothing. At first the novelty of the scene amused and interested him; but that soon wore off, although the barren fact remained that all were working, he only excepted. It depressed him to recognize it, and in these moments he told himself that he was the only useless one, and wandered back to the house, convinced that even in this land of slaves he was a pariah. He was not unduly conceited, yet he liked to recall the many years during which thirty thousand seemed a small income; but he remembered equally well the other years when one thousand seemed a large one. And between these remembrances he smoked his Powhatan, as he paced the long avenue of mango-trees, wondering what he could do, and invariably arriving at the same conclusion—*nothing!*

Withal, and in spite of his disappointment, he was kind to his little wife, and she was grateful to him, more for his patience, his self-denial, his conscientious endeavor to lead a "sober, virtuous, and righteous life," than for his constant, somewhat pathetic, devotion to her. Their existence on the *Santa Clara* was a simple one, dull and uneventful; but this she assumed to be right; for if in books she liked only the romantic, in life she believed only in the real and simple. Heroes

and heroines were proper enough in fiction, and great, stirring scenes became them well; but a scene between a gentleman and a lady was to be frowned upon. If Don Juan amused her in verse, she despised him in real life; the cloven foot might dance in a way to delight her imagination, but the patent-leather shoe always seemed spattered with mud, even if it had but just been wiped and oiled; and she admitted a vast distance between the vice suggested by *ennui*, and politely executed, and the same vice born of ignorance or misery. Like most good women, she could forgive, sometimes even forget, past offences, or at least consider them atoned for by present repentance; and so, during the first year and a half of her married life, Miss Sarah was happy—as happy as she felt was fair at her age.

An hour or two after sunrise, Thornton and his wife rode about the estate, saw that the work was rightly begun, and returned to the somewhat dilapidated "living-house," where for the remainder of the morning she busied herself with household matters and letter-writing. Breakfast was made at eleven or thereabouts, and after coffee they sat together either in the cool reception-room or on the veranda, according as the wind blew. He read aloud to her, and this decided, practical little woman always chose fairy tales, romances of chivalry, or sensational novels. Poetry and "instructive" reading she liked only in her own room. Of all books she was most fond of "Don Quixote," and she was rarely without a volume of the works of the ingenious gentleman, which might account for her own undertaking of reforming Thornton.

IV

More than a year had passed thus, and Miss Sarah looked upon her experiment as permanently successful. Thornton took little interest in what happened outside of the house; when visitors came, he usually retired to his own room upstairs, where he now spent the greater part of his time. He acknowledged that he was writing a book, though on what subject he refused to tell. His hours had, of late, become very irregular; many a time the administrator had marked the light of his lamp long after sunrise, and Miss Sarah, rejoicing to find that he was really engrossed in his work, became more and more confident.

"I am *very* happy," she wrote to one of her friends about this time. "Robert is *entirely and absolutely* recovered. I did not know at first which to dread most: the temptations of civilization, or the demoralizing influence of *ennui;* but now that he is writing a book and working with such interest, I am sure this is the best mode of life for him. He is very kind to me, and always *aux petits soins*, as you must remember him twenty-five years ago. My only troubles are physical; I am an old woman now . . . can you tell on which side of fifty? . . . and, *entre nous*, nearly as old as I shall ever be. My health is failing rapidly, but I can go now; my work is well done."

One evening, not long after this letter was written,

Thornton felt himself *en train;* the morning light surprised him at his table, not weary, but excited with the success of his effort. Only one more chapter, and the rough copy of his book was finished; he did not hope to write it that day, but the chapter stood complete in his head, and he wished to put the skeleton on paper while the impression was vivid and fresh. But at that moment he felt the need of a short respite from work, and he thought the music of the cane-cutters would not only soothe his over-excited mind, but, by its contrast with the scenes he was describing, refresh and stimulate his imagination. As he stood at the door of the veranda, the administrator came out of his room on the ground-floor, and Thornton asked him where they were cutting that morning.

"To-day, Don Roberto, is a holiday," he answered. "We kill a couple of cows, and distribute the meat among the negroes. After the early meal, and that will soon be over, the dancing will begin. If you have never seen it, it is worth watching at least once. Come over with me to the sugar-house first, where you will see the mulattoes at play; it is a pretty dance, graceful, and sometimes full of plantation wit, but it has not the barbaric quality of the 'black dance.'"

They crossed the *batey* together, and joined the small crowd under the cane-shed. Two bright-eyed yellow boys were endeavoring to start the ball by dancing on the stone-floor while they vigorously strummed their rude guitars. As usual, there was much smirking and shuffling and affected reluctance, until old Teresa, one of the house-servants, a burly, curly-headed mulattress, glided into the ring; a young

ox-driver stepped forward as her *vis-à-vis*, and the dance began. Whatever Teresa did, the other must reverse. If she raised her right hand, her partner must be ready with his left to catch the downward blow. If she ran he must follow. Her every intention he must intercept, and as the two warmed to their work it was a pretty sight to watch their smooth, agile movements —a perfect gestural interpretation of the music. Little by little others were drawn into the dance, and the figures became strangely complicated. Though each pair was dancing for itself alone, oblivious of all the others, their sense of time was so perfect that they seemed to be carrying out some intricate, yet, from the general harmony of the parts, evidently prearranged, figure. Among these, the Four Hundred of the plantation, who looked down with scorn upon the black rabble below, many a marriage (perhaps it were more prudent to say many a mating) was suggested during the dance, and eventually consummated without official interference or religious sanction — an expensive blessing, which the Cuban half-breed rightly considers of questionable value.

After watching this performance for about an hour, Thornton returned to the house, took his bath and cup of coffee, and sat down again before his table. But the spell was broken; he was no longer in the mood for writing, and through the open window the noise of the drums, accompanied by weird, abrupt cries, floated into the room and disturbed him. For some time he persevered, but soon recognizing the futility of his endeavor, he slipped a pistol into his pocket, and strolled over towards the *barrancon*.

The *barrancon*, or negro-barracks, was a large, one-storied, square building, nearly two hundred feet wide on the outside. In the centre of the open space stood a small rectangular house, where, in the old slave days, the chief of the negroes lived; and once the gate was closed, shortly after sunset, the old negro became a king until sunrise the next morning, when the watchman beat the gong to work, and he was once more a slave with the rest. To-day the little house is unoccupied, and used only on great occasions; for now there is no ruler in the negro quarters. The spirit of democracy has invaded even this last distant refuge of the *ancien régime*, and "every fool is lord in his own house."

Thornton pushed his way through the throng of Chinamen and hideous negro-Celestial mongrels that fringed the black crowd, and, seizing a chair that stood before one of the open doors, he sat down in the shade of the central house, from which place he could see all that was going on. The negroes were by this time too much excited to mind his presence. Opposite to him four large fellows, dressed only in a pair of short calico breeches and a loose shirt, with ends dangling, faced one another in pairs. Between their legs, and tied by a string to their waist, they held a rude drum, three feet long, covered at the wide, upper end with a piece of ass's skin, but open at the narrow bottom. To one of the hoops a piece of a tin can was affixed, and each drummer had a similar fragment tied to his left wrist. In his right hand he held a short, thick stick with which he beat the drumhead continually, scratching one piece of tin against the other, and producing the low sounds

by pounding the skin with the ball of the left thumb:

Tŭm-tōōhm——tŏŏhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tŏŏhm-ă-răh-răh!

The other negroes stand in a thick line around a clear space, twenty feet in diameter. All are excited, but silent yet. For more than an hour the monotonous pounding of the drums has been recalling—to the older ones, wild dancing scenes far away in scarce-remembered Africa; to the younger, the intense excitement of more recent *fiestas;* and awakening an inherited remembrance, if such a term may be used, of a distant home, not here . . . somewhere . . . *quien sabe* where it might have been? To them the ceremony has a supernatural, awful significance, and the ecstasy into which the dancers hope to fall is but an exotic form of religious hysteria, common enough under some other name both in civilization and out of it.

The drum calls; and in the crowd many a woman hesitates; shall she be the first to step out into the ring? The drum calls:

Tŭm-tōōhm——tŏŏhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tŏŏhm-ă-răh-răh!

Oh! the call of the drum! of the spirit-stirring drum! . . . Who answers first? Maya, Maya, the excited one. See her jump forward with a cry, her whole body quivering to the rhythm of the drum-beat. She walks around slowly, looking fixedly ahead with staring, sightless eyes, marking time with jerky, quick gestures that betray the curbed, passionate energy beneath. The drum beats low and slow—a prelude—and the crowd, taking up the new temper, clap their hands

together and sing words they no longer understand to-day, and which, as children, they learned by ear from the old ones who came from "over there:"

Yāh!—yă-yāh! Cā-ēēm-ah!
Hălāh! hălāh mee-oh! Hălāh!
Hāh—ayee—yăh!

Insensibly the time quickens; the drummers, in pairs, with faces close together, look into each other's eyes as if their whole soul were concentrated in that gaze, and mutually hypnotize each other, as they rise and fall, from toe to heel. Under the loose white kerchief with flowing ends the dancer's bosom heaves rapidly, and her fingers twitch. Her eyes are suffused, her shoulders bent forward, and her feet heavy as she moves slowly, smoothly, like a she-jaguar gathering herself up for a leap, and involuntarily the looker-on recalls the sullen lull that precedes a tropical thunder-storm. Her flesh feels the sting of all those eyes fastened upon it, watching with cunning, relentless eagerness, and shudders as the drum calls louder and faster,

Tŭm-toohm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!

The men are leaping up and down; the excitement grows, and the seething crowd pushes inward, rising and falling with sudden, unexpected movements, yet in perfect time with the sharper clapping of the hands and the accelerated beat of the drum. The cries grow harsher, more commanding; the words change:

Āh-wăyōh ——! yahēē —— mă yăh!
Āh-wăyōō ——! yăh —— mă yăh!

Faster yet! To the centre of the ring Maya begins to totter; her footsteps are uncertain; with her head thrown far back, her mouth wide open and eyes upturned, she plunges on as the drum insists:

Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!

Look! the spell is working—ha, ha! the spirit descends! Mark the rhythmic swaying of those black demons in the crowd, growing wilder, more erratic, more abrupt! Listen how frantically they clap and yell, those cries that are scarce human:

Āh! sĕcŭwāyēēh! nўārgăh!
ĕl gāh-ēē-ōh!

Faster, faster, you drummers! faster, you negroes . . . clap your hands and cry *tŭm-tōōhm!* with the drums. Cry aloud!—louder! And, mimicking the wild movements of the dancer, they crouch close to the ground, and rise and fall in their intense excitement, like a regiment of frogs. The old hags know when to change the cry; Maya is staggering helplessly. "Ah . . . ah . . . watch her carefully . . . there . . . *now!*"

Bā-bўēlăh! qŭe sĕ sĕcă!

Come along! Don't you see she is falling? I tell you . . . sing!

Bā . . . bўēlăh! quĕ sĕ sĕcă!

And quicker the drums—quicker the cries . . . harsh, hoarse, like angry barking:

Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!

Down! She is down! Eh? not yet! not yet! Then quicker, you black —— —— ——! See her arms beat the air wildly as she pitches forward! Ah, well done! another step . . . just one. . . .

Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!

There she lies, the black b——, face downward. That's right. Close in upon her. Yell, yell altogether; wake her once more! Yell again, damn you!

Āh! lă-lă-yŏō-ēe! mĕē-tămboh!
Lă-lă-yŏō-ēe! lă-lă-yōū-ēēē!

See, she moves—ha, ha! the old women have raised her to her feet. Come! just once more, Maya, dash your arms about; reel, stagger and reel . . . This spirit is stronger than rum—ha, ha! There, fling yourself headlong into the dust, and lie there quivering in time to the triumphant rhythm of the drums. . . .

Āh! —— Sĕmbĕrĕtāh!
Āh! —— Sĕmbĕrĕtāh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!

And now it is over; in spite of the noise she lies quiet in the ring, like one dead. The yelling and clapping of hands cease; she is borne insensible into the little house, seated in a high chair, and in the delirium that follows "she talks with the saints," while the others listen eagerly to her incoherent ravings.

Then she is put to bed, and outside the same thing begins again. The drums call; another steps forward, passes through similar stages of intoxication and delirium, and is finally carried off to bed; and so on until one after another all the women have undergone the ordeal. Even now that it is all over the drums still keep on their dogged refrain:

Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!
Tŭm-tōōhm——tōōhm-ă-răh-răh!

* * * * * * *

No one who has not witnessed this weird, barbaric dance for some hours at a time can understand the effect it produces upon the nerves. The unceasing, monotonous rhythm of the drum-beats, at first merely amusing, becomes wearisome, then exasperating, and finally as acute a torture as was produced in the good old days of the Inquisition by a small stream of water dripping for hours upon the same spot. When Thornton returned to the house after watching the negroes all the forenoon, he felt dazed and so unnerved as to need a stimulant. He stopped at the kitchen door to ask for a cup of coffee, but the place was deserted, and he walked away into the dining-room, where he sat down, quite exhausted. On the table before him stood some glasses, a water-cooler, and the usual bottle of brandy for visitors. It had been uncorked that morning, and was still intact. For a moment he looked at it with a good-naturedly contemptuous smile, poured out a glass of water, raised it to his lips, and put it down again untouched. For the first time in many months the old craving for spirits tempted him to forget his promise.

"I don't suppose it could do me any harm," he said aloud, and he stretched out his hand towards the bottle; at that moment a pigeon fluttered down from the veranda roof and the noise startled him; he hurriedly picked up the glass of water, drank it, and went out on to the porch.

There was no one in the house, for the servants were all at the dance, and the fresh marks of wheels on the carefully raked sand of the avenue proved that Miss Sarah had gone for a drive. Thornton lighted a cigar and looked wearily down the red road that stretched away between the gleaming colonnades of palms, until the three lines seemed to meet a couple of miles away under a continuous canopy of green plumes. From the negro quarters the incessant beat of the drums floated towards him across the hot yard, and recalled the strange scenes he had been watching. It was very warm, and a sense of great weariness came over him. Yet he felt nervous and ill at ease, and with his hands in the pockets of his coat he walked slowly up and down before the hall door. Once or twice he stopped, as if lost in thought; then, without any definite purpose, he wandered into the dining-room, and stood for a full half-minute hesitating and undecided before the table. Through the open windows he could see the deserted *batey* and the motionless landscape behind it. In the house nothing moved; the door of the administrator's office was open, and he saw that the room was empty. He was absolutely alone. Half-unconsciously he raised the bottle, held it up to the light, smelt it, and poured out a glassful.

"It's good stuff . . . genuine three-star," he said, in a

meditative way, "but I don't think I care for it. Water will do."

He laughed, and went out again. All was quiet as before; the usual afternoon breeze had not yet sprung up, and the heavy, glossy foliage of trees hung limp and motionless, as though cut out of metal. Opposite the house a mariposa bush was bursting into bloom, and the large scarlet stars blazed provokingly out of the dark background of verdure. Thornton picked a few of them, put them into a vase, and emptied the water-cooler into it. Then he went out again and looked around. And as before, save over in the sugar-house and *barrancon*, the whole surrounding landscape was silent and motionless.

"Heigh-ho!" he said, stretching himself and yawning wearily. "I think I'll go to bed," and, throwing away the stump of his cigar, he passed into the dining-room for another cup of water. The cooler was empty, but the glass of brandy still stood on the table, and taking it up he drank it off. "It can't possibly do me any harm," he repeated again, as he went upstairs to his room.

Half an hour later he opened the door stealthily and listened. No one had returned, and with an exclamation of satisfaction he ran down the stairs, secured the bottle, and, hanging his coat over his shoulder so as to conceal its bulk, he walked away down the mango avenue towards the "Volcano," an isolated cave in the limestone substratum of one of the fields.

V

Miss Sarah did not return until late in the afternoon. She had driven over to a neighboring plantation, and as the sun was very hot she felt both faint and tired; so she sent Teresa down to the dining-room for the bottle of brandy that had been left out that morning. The girl soon came back to say that it was gone; but as the house had been deserted during the greater part of the day, Miss Sarah supposed that some marauding negroes had stolen it, and dismissed the subject from her mind. After resting for an hour she asked for Don Roberto.

"He must be out," Teresa answered, "for his door is open, Mees Sarrah, and the room is empty. I saw him at the sugar-house this morning with Don Eusébio, and later, I believe, he went to the *barrancon*."

"Well, tell him when he comes in that I wish to see him here, Teresa. I am too tired to go down to dinner to-night, and you must bring me something up here."

But as the evening wore away and Thornton did not return, Mees Sarrah began to feel anxious. Then she remembered the missing bottle, and a terrible suspicion crossed her mind. With a cry she sprang from the bed and ran to her jewelry case, in the secret compartment of which lay the envelope he had handed to her on his arrival from Europe, and which she had

never opened; she had thought the mere fact of his coming proved that he had signed the promise. For a minute she held it in her hands, wondering whether she should look at it now; but her courage failed her. "If it is true, then it is a lie!" she groaned, somewhat inconsistently. "Oh, I don't want to know, I don't want to know!" she added, piteously, and, tearing the paper into small fragments, she ran into the next room as if to escape from her fears. Here, on the desk, lay a pile of manuscript which she turned over nervously, until she came to the title-page. Across it was written, in Thornton's bold hand,

"*Confessions of a Reformed Drunkard.*"

"Poor Robert!" she said, as she read aloud. "He has struggled bravely, I know, and I suppose we women cannot understand the strength of such temptations. Well! for better for worse I promised to take him; for better for worse I shall stand by him. Oh! Robert, you poor, weak man!"

She went back to her room and lay down on the bed, not to sleep, but to think and listen. Her loyalty to the man who was now her husband did not waver for an instant, and she blamed herself for his misfortune. It was clearly all her fault. How could a man, accustomed to the excitement of metropolitan life, bear the exile, the dulness of such a prison life as they were leading? Why had she led him into temptation? What could she do to retrieve her mistake? Why had she not been more interested in his work, more devoted in her attentions to him, more constant in her care and watchfulness over him, instead of being an invalid to

be cared for by him? What, oh *what* could she do now?

Deeply perplexed and worried, she cried herself to sleep. When she awoke, late the next morning, the whole horrible nightmare rose clearly before her mind. Without calling her maid, she dressed herself alone and cautiously, and opened the door of his room. Thornton had returned and was seated before the table, asleep, his head lying on his outstretched arms. The manuscript lay under one hand, and, as Miss Sarah noiselessly moved up to him, she saw that the word "reformed" had been crossed out from the title with a vicious dash of the quill.

"Poor Robert!" she said, below her breath. "It was not his fault . . . but it is a long fight to fight over again," and she left the room as noiselessly as she had entered. By skilful questioning, she discovered that none besides herself knew or suspected Thornton's relapse, and it gladdened her heart to learn this as though it had been good news.

In the afternoon, as she was lying on a couch under the awning of the veranda, he came down-stairs, smoking, as usual. Before the door he hesitated a moment, then walked up and kissed her hand.

"I am smoking," he said, apologetically, and, without looking at her, he drew up a chair and sat down where she could not see his face. "You look pale today, Sarah. I am afraid you are not very well?"

Involuntarily she pressed her hand over her heart and gave a little shudder. "Robert," she answered, very slowly, "if you have no objection, I think it would be better for us to go to New York. The doc-

tor here is not doing me any good, and I *should* like to know what *is* the trouble with me. I know it is selfish—and, perhaps, I should not say anything about it, but I am not quite myself to-day. Would you mind if we were to go soon? in fact, at once?"

Thornton was embarrassed, but on his guard; did she know or not? He hesitated before answering, and, to gain time, pretended to be lighting his pipe. Which was worse for him, this place or New York? He had lost all confidence in himself, and felt that any victory could only be temporary. The change of scene might help him; but was it worth while? Strangely enough, he did not look at the question from Miss Sarah's standpoint as an invalid; instinctively he had felt that the change was meant for him.

"I do not wish to interfere with your work, Robert," she continued, before he had determined what to say. "I know you are deeply interested in your writing, and our moving may disturb you; perhaps you would prefer to stay here until you have finished your book. I spoke just now as though I were in a great hurry; but that was only because I am feeling so nervous I hardly know what I am saying. A few weeks would really not matter to me—much." Then, as the recollection of the previous night's suffering was forced upon her by her own words, she was unable to control herself any longer; and, turning towards him, she said, quickly, her eyes filling with tears, "You have changed the title of your book?"

He started and winced. Of course she knew all! He rose abruptly from his chair, walked to the end of the porch, and stood there for some time, looking ab-

sently across the fields. Then, suddenly, he understood her sacrifice, her kindness; and, going back to her, he took her hand, kissed it, and held it between his own. He was moved, and his emotion was both genuine and deep.

"I was afraid it would come to this," he said, in a hesitating, uncertain voice. "The better was for me, the worse for you. I did try, though, Sarah, and yesterday morning I really believed it was—it was all past. Well, it is no use talking about it now; let us do whatever you think best. I don't know how it will turn out, but," he added, with a weak attempt at a smile, "as your friend Sancho says, 'When the eggs come to be fried, we shall see.'"

Miss Sarah looked up at him surprised, and smiled too; it seemed to her as if the gloom that had settled over her life suddenly lifted. His penitent manner had effaced the memory of the wrong, at least temporarily, and she was even now accusing herself of narrow-mindedness, of lack of generosity. She felt very grateful to him for his apology, and his humble acknowledgment of wrong-doing hurt her; so, looking up at him with much tenderness in her eyes, she answered in the same strain:

"'And God, who gave the wound, gives the salve!'"

"So may it prove, Sarah!" he said, bending down to kiss her hair. "Whatever you do will be best."

VI

It was not until after they had been established in New York for some time that Miss Sarah understood that she was really fighting against hope; but if she was obliged to acknowledge this to herself, she would have considered it disloyal to breathe a word of complaint to any of her friends or to accept any sympathy from them. When alone, and that was often, she brooded over her misfortune, and prayed very humbly for help; yet there was no thought of recrimination in her mind.

Even had Thornton been a model husband in every way, her life would have been sufficiently sad and monotonous. He left her early every morning to return only between five and six; her failing health confined her to the house more than half the time, and the dismal little flat which they could afford, in a very respectable but very uninviting street, seemed like a narrow cell when compared to the plantation with its distant, dreamy horizons. The sinister row of uniform brick boxes over the way was a poor substitute for the broad green fields of waving cane, or the long stretches of rich red ground, bounded by colonnades of palms. The dull lights of a gray day chilled her to the soul; and, accustomed as she had been to command amid general activity, she now deemed the praise of absolute *dolce far niente* more ironical than sincere. Yet her visitors invariably left the house amazed at her apparently

high spirits and good humor, and many found Miss Sarah at fifty as young and as entertaining as was Miss Sarah at twenty-five. To those who knew her best her wit seemed less keen, less spontaneous, perhaps, and the pathos of suffering was often but thinly veiled by a smile. But why should she be unhappy? they asked. She never did have any heart; where should she have borrowed one in her old age?

Thornton, on the other hand, seemed rejuvenated. At first he tried hard to regain some of the influence he had formerly held; but although his friends were pleased enough to entertain him, they seemed content to promise work or employment and forget the promises on the morrow. Many a former companion of his active days offered him the loan of a hundred dollars, without a thought of ever seeing the money again, yet declined to help him to anything permanent. So at the end of two or three months Thornton's virtue began to wane, and his bad qualities came to the surface. The capabilities of New York in certain downward directions are entirely beyond question; if Paris and London advertise their wickedness more openly, that of New York is more business-like. The corner-stones of its temples to Venus or Bacchus seem to have been laid with a steel spade instead of the traditional silver trowel. Paris drinks wine; London, beer or champagne; New York drinks whiskey. But if the grape or hop vine "had struck a fibre," the grain spirit had struck an artery; hence the effects of obedience to the great Persian's command,

"Drink! for you know not whence you came nor why,
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where,"

are geographically different. It was not long before Thornton's moral self succumbed, and he learned to forget his disappointment day after day in a way that involved neglect of everything and everybody. The first day that he came home in a doubtful condition, Miss Sarah was frightened for the first time in her existence. That evening she had been suffering more than usual, and the diversion caused the pain to pass from her body to her mind. With a woman's quick perception, she had understood as soon as he entered the room, and turned her face to the wall, pretending to sleep; while he, willing and thankful to be thus deceived, went to bed, blaming his friends, or the men who called themselves so.

To Miss Sarah this beginning was terrible; hitherto she had never been actually face to face with the demon of drink, and she still cherished a very small hope that he was more generous to his victims than he was reputed to be. But that night she understood him, and learned not to underrate him. Being Thornton's wife in the broadest sense of the word, she had forgiven, if not forgotten, before morning; but during that night she suffered what many a woman, but no man, can tell. Yet of all the wild nightmares that haunted her pillow there remained the next day but a feeling of infinite pity for Thornton, and a great longing to help him who needed help so much. But this sentimental reasoning was far too subtle and generous for Thornton's appreciation. He was nervous and moody on the morrow. As he walked down-town he thought over the events of the past twelve hours, and came to the conclusion that Miss Sarah had seen nothing—a conclusion which the

optimistic view of life suggested by his morning cocktail helped to confirm. Yet a small voice within him spoke to him of his wife's kindness; and that same small voice of conscience helped him to keep up appearances for some days thereafter.

Notwithstanding his persistent efforts, he did not succeed in obtaining any employment, and soon became dependent on forgetting his disappointment at the expense of his good resolutions. Indeed, before long the decency of concealing the effects of his weakness ceased to seem necessary. Perhaps he still knew what he was doing and did not care; perhaps, again, he was so near mother earth as to forget that he could go up the ladder as well as down. At all events, he continued his downward course steadily, without any abrupt slidings, but also without any attempt to pause, much less to rise.

In the face of these undeniable, brutally true facts, Miss Sarah persisted in seeming to ignore the real cause of Thornton's demoralization. When some friend happened to be in the room at the time of his return from down-town, she would watch him grope his way to the sofa after making a tipsy bow, and explain, while she struggled with a ghastly smile, that it was his devotion to her, his rigid economy in all matters pertaining to himself, that really caused this exhaustion. "The poor man merely takes a cup of coffee in the morning," she would say; "goes without lunch so as to save a few cents; and by evening he is so tired that he needs some stimulant, and, as he has eaten nothing all day, of course it goes to his head; but luckily it does not last more than a few minutes."

Day after day she repeated the same story, long after she had ceased to believe it herself, and she clung to this straw with pathetic desperation — although the truth, indeed, was cruelly evident, and it but exhausted the little vitality at her command to play her part with assumed sincerity. Sometimes, towards the end, she faltered in her explanation; she knew that her hearers believed it no more than she did herself, and yet, gulping down her sobs, and pretending to look out of the window, she bravely repeated the empty words, until, one day, she broke down utterly, and the doctor was hurriedly summoned. While her life was in immediate danger, anxiety counteracted the usual effect of Thornton's self-indulgence. He watched over her with the constant, matter-of-fact devotion—or attention—of a hospital nurse; yet, while she was asleep, he ran out to pawn his clothes in exchange for whiskey. He knew, of course, that he was doing wrong, and despised himself for his cowardice and weakness. By every solemn and sacred oath which his exalted imagination could invent or remember, he swore that each time should be the last, and yet but a few hours later he had made it the *last but one;* and the only limit of that function is eternity.

Let us endeavor to do him justice, even more than justice, and ask whether it be not our duty to pity a man afflicted by an imperious, incurable disease rather than to condemn him as a responsible sinner. Sane persons are not always absolutely qualified to judge or interpret the actions of the insane; after pronouncing them unsound of mind, they are too apt to jump on to a high pedestal and attempt the cure of the patient

from that altitude. Living, as we do, in well-regulated, civilized communities, and safe-guarded by our mutual relations to one another, we are rarely put to the test. But we see that among ourselves those who have seen and suffered most are the most lenient judges of human nature: they know its weakness; they have tested it practically. The community at large is rather prone to generalize in a vague, conceited way, and, having successfully passed through the ordeal of theoretical temptation, to repeat the pharisaic cant after draping itself in a mantle of untried virtue. Before pronouncing sentence, let us remember that respectable, well-educated, high-minded men have become cannibals—yea, even worse, ghouls—under the terrible temptations of hunger beneath an arctic night sky, and that these same men have sometimes returned to resume their respected stations in the community. Their knowledge of the power of temptation under abnormal conditions has taught them to be prompt to forgive and slow to condemn. From them we have a lesson to learn. In the kingdom of Alcohol and Opium there are many things undreamed of in our simpler philosophy. Let us beware of entering its limits; at the same time, let us forbear to condemn too soon the unfortunate who have come into the power of the merciless despot. Of their struggles, of their temptations, of their fall, we know nothing save that they have fallen; and to redeem the fallen, Christ came among us and was crucified.

All this Miss Sarah felt deeply, if she did not formulate it in these words. Thornton was a pitiable slave; to free him she had devoted the last and best energies

of her life, but in vain; and when she was once more able to totter from her bed to the sofa, she had already accepted her martyrdom in a martyr's spirit. The doctor had frankly admitted to her that her own end was approaching, and under the gray northern sky the little creole suffered cruelly. She longed for the southern sunshine, warm and bright; she longed for the dreamy, tropical scenery, with its stretches of hot desolation, its poisonous insect life, its palm-bounded horizons. The dull light of winter made her shiver inwardly as well as outwardly, and she believed that under the sun of Cuba the touch of approaching death would seem less damp, less chill. But for a long time Thornton either did not or would not understand, and at last the doctor was obliged to exchange his tone of friendly advice for one of professional insistence.

VII

On the plantation Miss Sarah seemed to revive, but it was only the last ray from the dying lamp. The Cuban doctor soon acknowledged that it was only a matter of days, not weeks, and so she prepared herself quietly for the unknown life beyond, considering every arrangement in detail as she would have done in the case of any other important transaction. Every negro on the plantation was brought to her room, and she gave to each some little remembrance, that they might not forget to pray for her when she was gone.

When she felt that the end must be very near, she called the administrator, Don Eusébio, and explained to him in detail how and where she wished to be buried. "In that trunk," she said, giving him her keys, "you will find the money that is necessary to pay all my small debts, and the expenses of my funeral — why do you start, friend? Some one must attend to these matters . . . is it not so? Well, it is all written down in that little book; you know my writing, so you will be able to read. Now, Don Eusebio, you have been a good friend to me and I should like you to wear this ring — it is of little value, but I was fond of it and have never been without it. And one thing more. Don Roberto, you know, is an invalid and — also for my sake—you must help him after I am gone. He may need—"

At that moment Thornton entered the room without knocking. Miss Sarah looked at him eagerly, then sank back and turned her face to the wall. "Go away!" she said, in English. "Go away, Robert; don't trouble me now!"

"Oh . . . very well!" he growled, making an ironical bow. "If you are feeling that way, I can wait; . . . sorry to disturb you!" and he went out, slamming the door behind him.

After a few moments Miss Sarah spoke, without turning her head.

"Don Eusébio!" she asked, "are you still there?"

"*Si, señorita!*" She waited a little while, then asked again. "Don Eusébio . . . do you believe there is a God?"

"Ah, *señorita*, sometimes it is difficult to understand. . . ."

"No . . . don't say that!" she interrupted. "Pray to him sometimes for me." An hour later she called again, faintly, "Don Eusébio!"

"*Señorita!* do you wish anything?" he asked, kneeling by the bedside. "Shall I call a priest?"

"No, friend; I am too near God to need a priest," she answered. "Good-by to you."

He took the little hand and kissed it. "*Vaya con Dios, señorita mia!*" he said, reverently, and, crossing himself, he bent his head. She had said to him, "Pray for me," and the worthy man was unused to prayer. "What a woman!" he kept repeating to himself in his perplexity. "What a woman to be thrown away on him! But he shall not disturb the funeral. . . . I shall send some brandy to his room and lock the door. . . . She had the heart of seven men, and the head of ten! A woman for whom one might commit even a crime! And *he?* . . . It seems strange justice to take the good and leave the useless . . . but God knows best . . . and . . . and there must be an atonement, of course. . . . She bade me pray for her . . . what shall I say? What does one say in prayers?" Then a light broke upon him. "God!" he said, aloud, "thy will be done; thou knowest what there is in my heart. Is there any need of words?"

VIII

I WAS sitting one day in the smoking-room of the A—— House, waiting for a friend, when a tall, fine-looking man, about sixty years of age, took the chair next to mine, and the appearance at the door of a local celebrity afforded a pretext for opening the conversation. My companion seemed to have travelled widely and seen much of the world. He spoke with evident knowledge on many objects, artistic, literary, and technical, and was undoubtedly a man of ability. I was so much impressed by his easy conversation and picturesque criticisms that when he rose to go I said to him:

"May I ask, sir, what is your profession?"

He hesitated a moment before answering, then looking straight at me with a curious, yearning expression in his eyes, he said, impressively:

"One of the worst, sir; I am a drunkard."

Perhaps that man was Robert Thornton, perhaps again not; for many a time since then, and in other places, I have believed that I was talking with Miss Sarah's husband—there are so many like him!

LA LOUVE

A STORY OF THE SPANISH BORDER

LA LOUVE

A STORY OF THE SPANISH BORDER

ABOUT half-way between the unimportant little town of Hasparren and the yet smaller and less important hamlet of Isturitz you may, even to-day, see the ruined walls of the Château de Gravemont. To tell the truth, these ruins are neither very imposing, very suggestive, nor very picturesque, and, were it not for the fact that they unquestionably are ruins, and that for some mysterious reason ruins of any quality appeal to the traveller's imagination, I must doubt whether you would care to stop even long enough to jot down the name in your note-book.

Your driver, who is certain to be either a Lartigues, a Labadie, or an Etchegoyen, will probably inform you that the last Count of Gravemont was killed in 1870 at the battle of Orléans; that the place was subsequently sold, and that the proceeds, together with what was realized on the count's personal effects in Paris, enabled his executors to pay a small percentage of his debts. That, like a true French nobleman, he looked upon the privilege of making debts as a birthright, and divided them into two classes: debts of honor, that unfortunately required to be paid at once;

and other debts, that fortunately did not require to be paid at all, at least during his lifetime. And as these, I grieve to say, are very commonplace facts and do not in any way atone for the simple homeliness of the ruin, you will probably continue your journey without further delay: whereas, had I been with you, I could have told you that the "She-wolf" was born and brought up in the eastern tower which you saw there on the very top of the hill. You don't remember the "She-wolf"—that superb, large-eyed creature whom you met early yesterday morning between Bidart and Biarritz? But perhaps you were not out betimes.

Well, when you return tell Marceline to wake you any morning at a quarter before five, and take up your stand on the Falaise road a hundred yards or so behind the little *octroi* lodge. If you are early and have to wait, sit down under the tamarind hedge that skirts the cliff, and endeavor to find among your recollections something more beautiful than the vast panorama spread out before you; something more ideal than the deep, varied, transparent coloring of that corner of Biscay; something more delicate than the long picturesque line of mountains that begins at distant Yvauntelli on your left, and finally loses itself in the blue-green sea at Cape Lequeitio, seventy miles away on your right.

Just as the sun begins to flash on the glass dome of Lady Bruce's "Alhambra," you will see the "She-wolf" appear at the foot of the hill, running lightly and swiftly towards you.

Her brown legs are bare to the knee, and, with her right hand on her hip, she holds the folds of her short

skirt away from them. Her shirt—a fisherman's flannel—is open in front, and her white fichu is hanging loosely half-way down her back. Most probably a braid of her heavy black hair has slipped from her blue handkerchief and looks alive with bright salt drops shaken from the basket of silver-scaled sardines which she steadies on her head with her raised left hand. When she reaches the *octroi* she will stop, put down her basket for the long-coated, mustachioed little official to examine; quickly readjust her hair, pull the neckcloth forward, and shake out a few inches of skirt. For a moment she will stand there, panting, her black eyes and white teeth flashing in the sun, and the beautiful swelling curves of her breast rising and falling regularly. Then after a rapid survey of her dress she will bend down, raise her basket to her head with a graceful sweeping gesture, and stride away towards the *halle* with the step of a goddess. I am not sure that you will not follow and make her an offer for her whole basketful of fish—as others have done before you—and possibly ask her where she got her name. But that is what I had begun to tell you.

Some years ago, yet not so very many after all, Maître Hennebutte, notary at Bayonne, received from the Vicomte de Gravemont a short letter, informing him of the sudden death of the count, his father, to whose titles and estates he thus succeeded. In this letter he requested Maître Hennebutte, in not overpolite but unmistakably precise language, to dismiss the acting administrator, sell the common furniture now in the château, and forward to Paris such pictures, etc., as might be worth keeping. He was, more-

over, to appoint some keeper at a low salary to look after the place and live in the servants' commons; and, as soon as was convenient (the sooner the better) to send in the accounts to a certain business agent whom the count had intrusted with the management of his affairs.

A month later the château was stripped, and Victor Vispaly, a young Basque farmer, was duly installed as keeper. Vispaly brought his newly married wife with him, and not long after their arrival she bore him a daughter whom they named Cathchaline, and who afterwards became the woman they call the "She-wolf." Her early education—if such a term can be applied to the teaching which nature gives the poor—was that which children of her class in life receive, or fail to receive, according to your idea of what education means. In one of the two loose little shirts which composed her entire wardrobe the child learned to crawl, walk, and finally run about in the silent, deserted court-yard where the grass had begun to grow between the square paving-blocks. She frightened the restless, cackling hens, and was in turn frightened by the slower but equally noisy geese. From behind the fence-bars she gazed in silent wonderment at the silent gazing cow, and with instinctive fellow-sympathy for dirt she wallowed in the mud among the perpetually rejuvenated litters of young pigs. Like other children, she received her allotted share of caresses and her allotted share of reproofs; laughed, cooed, cried, and with a comically solemn expression of face pondered the mysteries of life while squeezing one or more fat little fingers between her hardening gums. In time she

learned first to stammer and then to talk her pretty *patois*, and eventually mastered a little bad French and some worse Spanish.

As she grew older she gave unmistakable signs of possessing a proud disposition and a quick temper, which might be accounted for partly by the solitary life she led, with no one to restrain her but her over-fond, indulgent, careless parents, and partly by the seeming tyranny which such a small thing was obliged to affect in order to secure obedience from the animals intrusted to her care. Still, in spite of her pride and independence, she was a kind, affectionate, good-natured child; wild, as was to be expected from such training as she received, yet reasonably obedient to kind words.

Perhaps the most positive proof of the real goodness of her heart was to be found in her love for all animals, domestic or wild, a love which they seemed to understand and, as far as lay within their possibilities, to return. She scampered over the hills with her merry, mischievous goats, merry and mischievous as they; and climbed trees after the bushy-tailed squirrels, who sat and looked at her with their intelligent little heads cocked on one side, apparently as well amused to gaze at her as she was to watch them. The bats and owls that had moved with their families into the deserted rooms of the château confided to her the results of their silent moralizing; and even the loose-tailed lizards lost their perpetually frightened expression when she came near, and winked at her rather pointlessly with their long, ever-moving eyes. In a word, she delighted in nature, and loved her dumb companions better perhaps than she could have loved other children.

When she was ten years old, Vispaly's sister died, and her orphan boy, Pascal, came to live at the château. For a long time Cathchaline could look upon him merely as one more in the circle of her playmates. It is true that the power of expression by articulate speech had not been denied him, as, for some wise reason no doubt, nature had denied it to her other children; but to the girl he did not seem to be able to say more than could these others, and it was only by insensible degrees that she came to recognize him as superior to them, and indeed to herself. They led together the same life that hitherto she had led alone, yet little by little she unconsciously acknowledged his leadership, and allowed—nay, even expected—him to propose and direct the day's work or the day's play. She sang to the tune he whistled, talked with him when he talked, and was content to remain silent if that pleased him better than talking. Together they rambled over the country, clambered over the rocky hills, or, lying on their backs in the tall fragrant grass, gazed up at the passing clouds; and for four years nature pursued her silent work of equally developing these two children physically and mentally. Their physical progress was evident, undeniable, and its results beautiful; but the more complex process of mental development was less easy to follow or describe. Whatever the steps might be, the results must be healthy, pure, and good, and there was no one to question them or interfere with their achievement by asking perplexing and unanswerable hows and whys.

So things went on happily until Cathchaline was fourteen and Pascal perhaps eighteen—children still, if

you will, but ready at any moment to develop into man and woman should the proper agency be brought to bear upon them. About this time Vispaly took a severe cold, which developed into pneumonia, and, in the natural order of things, he died. To the great world outside, his death, like the death of any man of his class, was an accident of no greater moment than the fall of a tree or the drying-up of a well; but to the little world at Gravemont it was a great event. Pascal was no longer willing to accept from a woman the simple, kind hospitality which his uncle had offered him; he felt that it was time for him to work and help the two lonely women, instead of receiving help from them. So, less than a month after Vispaly's recall from this world, he came in one day with the news that he had joined the confraternity of the *contrabandistas*, had taken the oath of fellowship, and would henceforward spend but little of his time at home. His aunt, who had a great respect for the boy's judgment, received the news calmly, and bowed her head, as broken-spirited people meekly do, before the decrees of fate. For her the period of possibilities was past, and that of the inevitable had begun. Cathchaline was left to her, and she felt that what Providence gave was no doubt all that she had any right to expect.

The girl, however, took the departure of her playmate more to heart. It would, perhaps, not be true to say that she was herself fully conscious of the depth of her feelings in this matter; for whatever the influence of this separation might be upon her life, it took some time to manifest itself, and there was no one near to hasten this manifestation by remarking

upon it and thus forcing it upon her conscience. Nevertheless, it was not long before she realized that her world was no longer the same. Her activity, her natural, exuberant gladness in all that lived about her, her sympathies with her dumb playmates of but a few months before, had undergone a great change. She grew restless and at the same time silent and moody. She was constantly expectant of something that did not come, and vague longings began to fill her heart. She lived a very real, healthy life, and yet she lived it mechanically, as if her body had grown accustomed to its routine of daily duty, and performed it without the concurrence of her inner self, which was absorbed in dreams. Perhaps it would be more exact to say that she lived in a state of constant dreaminess; for her dreams never took any distinct form, never came to any definite conclusion, and, in a word, never shaped themselves so distinctly that her mind could grasp them. Sometimes, after playing with a rabbit or a squirrel, she would, without apparent reason, burst into tears and, lying in the grass, sob as if her heart would break. These cries always had a soothing effect upon her, and for some days following she was more like her former self. But this happy state would not last. She would soon again grow restless and passionately long for something—she knew not what.

Meanwhile Pascal was succeeding well in the hazardous life he had undertaken. At intervals he came to Gravemont to pass a day and a night, and while he was there it seemed as though the old state of things had come back and he had never been away. He rarely came without bringing some present from "be-

hind the mountains" for Cathchaline; and a present of money, sometimes more, sometimes less, for his aunt, who received it with a simple word of thanks, and smiled to herself as she put it away in an old stocking under her mattress. He was dressed in the picturesque *contrabandista's* costume, and when at night he sang to the women in the large, dark kitchen of the château, accompanying himself on his guitar, Cathchaline thought him the handsomest boy in the world. And, indeed, when he stood in the bright fire-light with his left foot on the projecting andiron, his eyes flashing with enthusiasm, and singing the spirited smuggler's song, "*Yo que soy contrabandista*," it would have been difficult not to acknowledge his manly beauty or to find fault with the symmetrical grace of his figure.

On the other hand, he was astonished to find among the women whom he saw in the town and villages not one to compare with his little Cathchaline at home. When it first occurred to him to make this observation he had naïvely said to himself that he was accustomed to her features and liked them, and that, moreover, he had not seen many other women. But as time went on he recognized that his preference was justified. He had seen the great beauties of Spain publicly at the bull-fights in San Sebastian, and more privately when he went to their apartments to offer his smuggled gloves and ribbons. In Biarritz he had seen many beautiful women, French and Russian, American and English; yet of all, Cathchaline was undoubtedly the fairest, and one evening he told her so, bluntly and simply. Mother Vispaly again smiled to herself as she bent her eyes more attentively upon her knitting,

and Cathchaline blushed so deeply that she rose from her chair and turned away. Her pleasure was so intense that it gave her positive physical pain; she gasped for breath and closed her eyes, which had suddenly filled with tears. For a little while she sat silent, with her hands tightly pressed together in her lap; then she could bear it no longer, and ran out of the room up to the loft, where she threw herself down on the sweet-smelling hay and cried herself to sleep. He had not told her that he loved her, but she had suddenly understood that she loved him, and for to-day that was sufficient.

The next morning, as she was standing by the wall of the cow-yard, Pascal came out of the house and, in a careless way, threw his arm around her as he had often done before. But many things had changed since yesterday's sunset, and this simple action now had the power to awaken emotions of which Cathchaline had hitherto been ignorant; so she quietly took his hand and removed it from its position on her waist so naturally that he scarcely noticed it, or that she at the same time moved a step away from him. When the time came for him to say good-by she was not to be found, but even this unusual event did not awaken any suspicion in Pascal's simple mind. He kissed his aunt, shouldered his bundle, and, crying out the customary "*Adieusse la compagnie!*" strode away down the hill without seeing Cathchaline, who stood watching him from one of the upper windows of the château. When he had disappeared she ran quickly down the crumbling staircase and took the road to Hasparren, where she bought a looking-glass from Moureu,

the barber. "I wish my wife could see as pretty a face every time she looked in the glass," the man said to himself as she left the shop; "but in this country the likes of them is only for bull-fighters and smugglers. *Similia similibus.*"

Cathchaline was not yet out of town before she had torn the wrapping-paper and tried to steal a fugitive glance at herself in the glass. Behind the first stone wall she opened the package, and, laying the mirror down on the ground before her, she looked for a long time at the picture which it showed; but what advice the mirror gave, I suppose only a woman could tell. Whatever it was, this advice was often repeated, and when Pascal returned a month later he could not but notice that the girl's appearance was greatly improved.

The exciting novelty of the *contrabandista's* life, which at first had caused Pascal to forget his home, or at least to think but little of the two women composing it, had worn off, and of late his pretty cousin had been much in his thoughts. The greater part of the weighing and considering, which among primitive people is, after all, but a simple addition or subtraction, had been concluded long ago; and when at last his feelings asserted themselves, the question of marriage was, as far as he was concerned, practically settled: it remained for Cathchaline to say whether it was so for both of them.

In this matter of propounding and answering the momentous question, country people undoubtedly enjoy a great advantage over the more cautious form-ridden inhabitants of towns; the scene is usually a simple one, and its action rapid and decisive. He asks, "Will

you marry me?" and she answers, "I will" or "I won't," which statement is followed, as the case may be, either by kissing and blushes, or by a rapid exit and some fugitive pricks of conscience. In this particular case the answer produced not only the kissing and pretty blushes, which mother Vispaly, whose knitting had suddenly become very troublesome, did not see, but a great deal of joy in which she heartily shared.

Not many weeks after this memorable evening, Pascal came to spend the night, as of late he had more frequently found excuse for doing. He was in high spirits, and told the two fond women that, should this last expedition prove successful, he would clear enough to enable them to be married at once. Up to this time he had been more than usually fortunate, and, of course, his luck would not forsake him now. So they sat together in the kitchen, as was their habit, and made happy plans until late in the night; for Pascal was to leave them at sunrise, and they had much to arrange for the great day.

The *junta* of the *contrabandistas* was to take place two days later in the hall of Montalivet's inn at Isturitz, and Pascal still had to cross over into Spain to complete his pack. With the exception of what he had given to mother Vispaly, he had risked his whole fortune on this one venture, and his bundle was full of good lace and fine silk embroideries. If, as he confidently expected, he passed the line safely, the disposal of the articles was merely a matter of a few days, and the proceeds would allow him to rest for nearly a year, during which time he could do a little business in partnership with some of the active smugglers and per-

haps only have to leave Cathchaline once in a long time. Isturitz, their famous rendezvous, was well over the border in France; but the *douaniers* had not yet been able to organize their line in the wild mountainous country in which it lay, and where the inhabitants were even more hostile to the government than those of the villages which they already held. At this time, not long before the last Carlist war, the smugglers were very active and daring; a rumor had spread among them that the same taxes which existed in France were to be imposed over the border, and that the sale of tobacco was to become a government monopoly. If put into practice, these measures would prove a more effectual obstacle than any increase of the customs police. Moreover, some of the *contrabandistas* had received from men connected with that department private offers of government posts: these had, of course, been made known to the confraternity, and it was felt that a new and unforeseen danger threatened it at the first serious break in the ranks. Besides, war was imminent on the other side of the Pyrenees, and none could foretell what policy would be adopted at its close. The present was certainly the golden time, and, as they remembered that the morrow might prove to be only a bald opportunity, they endeavored to live up to the maxim of not postponing until then what could be attended to at once.

When Pascal entered the inn, the hall was still empty. He tied his long-haired white dog to one of the rings fixed for that purpose in the wall of the courtyard, and, feeling tired, he lay down on one of the long benches that followed the tables around the room, and

went to sleep. One by one the *contrabandistas* came in and deposited their bales along the walls. Nearly all called for bread and cheese and a jug of wine, and ate rapidly, mostly in silence; then lighted a cigarette or a small-bowled clay pipe, filled with very rank home-grown tobacco. Altogether there were about seventy men in the room, some mere boys, while a few had white hair and moustaches; but all wore the blue *berret*, short black jacket and bright-red sash; each had the thong of a *maquila* passed round his wrist, and a knife in his belt. As a rule, they were fine, muscular-looking men, with bright black eyes, a laughing mouth, and a bold, reckless, good-natured expression that seemed out of place in the gloomy hall, lighted only in the centre by some tallow dips stuck in empty bottles. Those who talked at all spoke in a subdued voice; and even these whispered conversations ceased suddenly as old Montalivet came forward and placed an earthen dish between the lights in the middle of the table. Some of the older men gathered around him, while the rest placed themselves on his left. When he saw that they were all ready, he shook the dice-box which he held in his hand and threw—seven. That was the fighting number.

The smugglers passed before him in single file, and each threw the dice in turn, then walked over to the right side of the table, or, if he had thrown a seven, remained standing by the fireplace, behind the innkeeper. Meanwhile, Pascal was still asleep on his bench. When his turn came they woke him, and he came forward with his eyes half open. The dice rolled up—three, four. "What was the number to-night?" he asked, as he put them back in the box.

"Seven," answered Montalivet; "you have it. Has every one thrown?" he added, raising his voice; then, as he received no answer, he turned to the men standing behind him and said: "Boys, it is time to get ready."

There were five besides Pascal; so six carbines and dummy bales were brought in from the blacksmith's shop next door, while the appointed men placed their packs on the table to be divided up among the rest. Their duty was to go ahead first with their dogs, and, if possible, to concentrate the line of *douaniers* in one spot; while they were fighting, the rest could spread out rapidly and pass across into the safe country beyond. When they reached Bayonne, the things belonging to the men of the forlorn hope were deposited in some safe place, where, if they returned, they could claim them; if they did not return, and it was ascertained that they had been killed, their property was sold by their comrades, and the proceeds sent to the families of the victims. Sometimes not a shot was fired and all passed the line safely; but again at others, desperate encounters took place between the soldiers and the *contrabandistas*, and then never more than half, seldom more than a third, and sometimes none, contrived to escape. It was extremely rare that a smuggler was made a prisoner; he never surrendered, and when any was taken it was because he was too severely wounded to resist any longer. In this war the dogs played a prominent part, each one being considered equal to a man. The smugglers trained their animals never to bark and always to keep close to their masters; their opponents, on the contrary, taught their dogs to scour the country and give voice constantly when on a hot trail.

When all was ready, the six men held a rapid consultation with Montalivet and shook hands among themselves. Then they passed down the line of their comrades, shook each silently by the hand, and, after untying their dogs, struck out cautiously in the appointed direction.

On the day before the *junta*, Cathchaline for the first time felt anxious about Pascal. Heretofore she had listened to his stories as one listens to stories of adventure and danger which do not concern either ourselves or any one we know; she had never been convinced of the reality of Pascal's life as a smuggler, and being frightened now for the first time, her anxiety was the deeper for its suddenness. She shuddered at the thought of what might happen, and shook her head as if she could thus throw off the doubts which beset her. But in spite of her efforts she could think only of the danger to which he was exposed, and finally she broke down and cried hysterically. Long before dark she had persuaded herself that something had already really happened, and the light of her life seemed to have gone out. The slightest noise made her start; and, although she knew that the smugglers did not leave Isturitz before ten or eleven, the slamming of a door or of a loose shutter, which she magnified into the report of a gun-shot, made her clasp her hands in an agony of terror. At last she could bear it no longer, and, after kissing her unsuspecting mother, she went out, called her dog, and ran towards the pass near which Pascal had told her that they would probably cross the line. When she had reached the place, she crouched down under a bush, holding her dog by the collar, and

waited. In her anxiety it was a great consolation to feel the warm, breathing thing near her, and when her distress became unbearable, to press its shaggy head against her breast and kiss it. At times even, forgetting where she was, she spoke to it as if it were Pascal, and it soothed her to bury her face in its soft coat, and fancy that she was in her lover's arms; or she would raise her eyes to the dark sky overhead, and mutely pray for him, and, possibly unconsciously, for herself also; for, after all, she was very human, felt her own weakness, and was in sore need of help.

In the meantime the sky had clouded over, and greenish flashes of lightning behind the Pyrenees announced a storm. A few heavy drops fell, and ceased again as the thunder began to roll with a muffled sound in the distance. At every rumble Cathchaline started forward and listened for a moment, half dreading, and yet at the same time hoping, that it might be a gunshot. Her suspense was becoming intolerable, and it seemed to her that even the worst news would be preferable to this uncertainty. The cold drops that fell from the overhanging branches on to her neck and trickled down her back made her shiver, and for a moment the sensation distracted her. Without understanding why she did so, she picked up a sharp stone and pressed its ragged edge into her foot; and when the silence became too deep she imitated the cries of night-birds or the dismal howling of the mountain wolf, smiling, in spite of her anxiety, at the excellence of her imitation. Then she listened again more eagerly than before, fearful that during the momentary distraction some important noise had escaped her atten-

tion; and when she could perceive nothing but the myriads of infinitesimal sounds that make the silence of night, she took the dog's head in her hands, and cried, in a passionate, pathetic voice, "Pascal! O Pascal!" while the fond animal licked her face as if he understood and pitied her.

Meanwhile the minutes were slowly passing away as they always do, and with every moment the lightning became more vivid, the flashes more frequent, and the roll of the thunder sharper. Suddenly the dog stiffened itself on its legs with a low growl, and, tearing itself from her grasp, bounded away into the darkness. Cathchaline rose and held her breath; a yellow light, followed by a sharp report, flared among the bushes before her, and she sprang forward. Then came more shots, and in the silence between them she heard the angry gasping of the dogs. A man spoke a few quick words, and immediately a bright fire of twigs, saturated with rosin, sprang up in the clearing, where Pascal with two of the *contrabandistas*, taken by surprise, were brilliantly illuminated, while the *douaniers* knelt together in comparative darkness. A few steps ahead of his men the officer stood by himself, holding his sword loosely in his left hand, and with a pistol in the other taking a slow aim at the smuggler. With a wild, unearthly cry that startled the men, the girl bounded past them, seized the officer's sword, and struck him with all her remaining strength—but too late, for Pascal had fallen.

When Cathchaline regained her senses, a number of smugglers had gathered around their fallen comrade; she pushed them rudely aside, and, kneeling down, she

gently lifted him in her arms and rested his drooping head against her breast. Without looking at his wound, she instinctively felt that it was fatal, and that her lover was dead. She could neither speak nor weep, and it seemed to her as if some vital cord had suddenly given way within her—she hesitated a moment, and kissed his lips mechanically, as if obeying the last impulse of her departed will; then she let him fall back heavily, passed her hand over her eyes as if she had been asleep, and walked away in the direction of Gravemont.

For several years nothing was seen of her in the surrounding country. During this time the story was circulated that the young officer, who was of good family, and the manner of whose death was consequently investigated into, had been killed by some wild animal. His men, seized with a sudden panic, had run away when they heard her cry, which they compared to the howl of a she-wolf, and as she had passed through the lighted space so quickly, they only remembered seeing her large dog bounding after her. Some years later, when the dreaded reforms had been put into practice, and smuggling, as it was once understood, had become a thing of the past, one of Pascal's *contrabandistas*, who had turned *douanier*, recognized the girl, and called her *La louve*, the "she-wolf"—and the name had clung to her.

Now, every morning during the sardine season, you will see her leave a little cottage in the fishermen's quarter of Ciboure, which, you know, is opposite to Saint-Jean-de-Luz, and go down to the jetty where the boats land and the women stand waiting for their bas-

ket-load of fish. Here she will patiently bide her turn; then, without having spoken a word, will swing her basket on to her head and dash away for Biarritz.

They say that now she is but half-witted, and, poor thing! that may be true; but she is kind, patient, and meek; she hurts nobody, and her love for dumb animals has survived the loss of her mind, as you will see from the half-pitying, tender way in which she touches even her dead fish. When she has sold them all, she saunters listlessly back to Saint-Jean-de-Luz, sometimes by the road and sometimes by the deserted beach. And if you follow, you may see her stop to liberate a struggling fly, or, leaning over some half-washed rock, scrape out a passage in the sand for the shrimps and little fish whose life has been imperilled by some careless, mighty sweep of the tide. When the little work of compassion is done and the ungrateful prisoners have disappeared, you will see her rise and continue her road, singing, in a low voice to herself, the first words of Pascal's favorite song, "*Yo que soy contrabandista.*" Perhaps in that poor brain the recollections of the happy days at Gravemont are as vivid today as they were years ago—and yet who knows? She speaks to no one, and confesses her thoughts not even to the priest. To this day she remains the most beautiful creature on the coast, and of this she is as unconscious as the sun's rays, that alone have the privilege of kissing her full red lips and bringing a smile into her large soft eyes.

THAT YANK FROM NEW YORK

"THAT YANK FROM NEW YORK"

THE gray of dawn was beginning to brighten with roseate flashes of light as Joseph Bell unhooked the door of his adobe dwelling and stepped out on to the little veranda overlooking the plateau of the Cotera mine, where he sat down wearily on the brick coping. He had passed an anxious, sleepless night, and his features wore an expression of listlessness and disappointment which showed that he was in trouble. For a few minutes he sat quiet with his head in his hands; then, springing nervously to his feet, like a man who had come to a sudden decision, he struck the signal-gong nailed against one of the pillars of the porch, lighted a cigar, and, blowing the smoke of the first whiffs far away, said aloud:

"Well it's got to stop; and, what's more, it is going to stop to-day. I suppose I had better see Garcia about it first," he added, meditatively, after a few puffs. "These Mexicans know their country better than do we Gringos, with all our conceit and mistaken contempt for the genus Greaser. Ah! Torribio, *buęnos dias*," he went on, as his *mozo*, draped in a blue *serape*, walked up, jingling the little bells on his spurs.

"*Buenos dias*, Don Pepe! You passed a good

night?" the boy cried out in answer. "You struck the gong?"

"Yes. We are going to Alamos. Let Féliz get ready. I'll take him along, too. And tell the captain I wish to see him here at once. Be quick now, and see that Teresa brings the coffee. And, by the way, I'll take my carbine this morning."

When the boy had disappeared, Bell took down his spurs and his revolver from a nail on the wall, and buckled them on leisurely; then he sat down again and waited. The day's work was decided upon, and he could afford to thrust his cares aside; for, now that he was about to grapple with them materially, they seemed much less formidable than during the long hours of the night, when he was endeavoring to make up his mind as to what really was his duty. The morning air was fresh and cool, his cigar was good, and his coffee deliciously aromatic, so why not enjoy the sensuous pleasure of the moment? Life in Sonora offers none but the most material enjoyments, and those not so often as to dull the appetite for comfort; as for disagreeable duties, they form the major part of the day's routine, and amply sufficient unto each day is that part thereof. The cactus bears a thousand times a thousand thorns that last the year round, and but a handful of mildly flavored fruit that ripens once in May; so let the May-time be a holiday!

While he was half unconsciously trying to convince himself that this very practical, if not very ennobling, philosophy was the best, Bell was aroused from his reverie by the approach of big Jack Corbis, the captain of the mine.

"Good-morning, Mr. Bell," he cried out, stopping a few feet away from his boss and dropping the head of a pick which he carried on his shoulder, more as a badge of his office than for the purpose of applying it to any practical use. "You be up kind o' early this mornin', sorr. Hot day, too, it's meanin' to be, sure 'nough!" he added, wiping his forehead with the back of his wrist and looking up at the pink-and-gray ripples of cloud in the sky. Then, as if suddenly recollecting something, he said in an indifferent tone: "Toeribyoe let on as how you was wantin' to see me here, Mr. Bell. C'n I help ye any?"

There was in his tone, as usual when he spoke to the superintendent, a suggestion of patronizing kindness or condescension, and Bell naturally resented it; for Jack's whole manner seemed to imply, "I know exactly what is to be done, but it is a part of my duty to come up and ask you, just as if I didn't; so here I am to fulfil this little formality before going to work in my own way; but there's no hurry." And he emphasized this by jerking a tobacco-pouch from his hip-pocket and leisurely filling his pipe.

Bell half smiled, half frowned, as he read the man's thoughts, flattered by the ease with which he did so, yet at the same time displeased at his own implied inferiority. "Not merely implied, though," he was obliged to own to himself as he looked at Jack's stalwart figure and brawny arms. "As an animal he is worth five of me, and I suppose that down here a man should be gauged rather more than less by his physical points. Then, too, he has had twenty years' experience below ground, and I have had less than

one; he will intuitively solve nine problems out of ten, while I have to puzzle over and work them out on paper, without even then being sure that I am right. Yet he earns four dollars a day to my fifteen, and has to take his orders from me—'that Yank from New York'—who but a few months ago was no more than a *stud. rerum met. et mont.* If I were in his place I should resent it less good-naturedly than Jack does, I am sure. Taking it all in all, I think he behaves remarkably well. To be sure, there's the tenth problem—" his *amour propre* suggested, and the consciousness of his superiority returned to him at once.

"I don't know that you can help me, Jack," he answered, quietly, "beyond carrying out what orders I give you. I am going into town this morning, and shall not be back before sunset, so we must postpone surveying the old *socabon* until to-morrow. You can put on two extra gangs in the Salon Grande, and run the rest as usual. At five I want you to blow the whistle and send all the men—mind you, *all* of them —up to the compressor-room. I shall have something to say to you. That's all for this morning."

The boys had come up with the mules before Bell concluded, and without waiting for an answer he vaulted into the saddle. As he rode away he was conscious of a feeling of relief at not having to listen to Jack's reply, and at the same time of a certain sense of shame at his momentary cowardice. "Heigh-ho!" he said to himself, "this playing at all or nothing requires more nerve than I am sure of being able to count upon; and how different this is from the pretty

chess-play we read of in books! It is no longer a moving of a wooden or an ivory king—or—at least the king now is myself. How shall I come out this evening? *Quien sabe?*" And, as in life some innocent victim must always suffer for the disturbed vibrations of our temper, Bell's mule was suddenly and rather undeservedly reminded that her rider was a "caballero with silver spurs."

Meanwhile Jack Corbis stood on the same spot, holding his half-closed hands over the bowl of his yet unlighted pipe, with a half-admiring, half-doubtful expression on his handsome cavalier's face. "Well—I'll be tchee-war-war'd!" he said, finally and conclusively, as he drew a match across the rear of his overalls. "The young un said that as if he really was a-goin' to fight the crowd on us—Gringos an' Cornishmen an' Greasers an' Injuns—jest as we stand. Wal! I doan' know but I like that; come now, hang me if I doan't. We'll make a miner of that boy some day, sure's taxes. He can't have all the men, mind ye, though. There's that job down to the Rochin cross-cut's got to be fixed to-night. All right, now, Master Bell; we'll give you a show, or my name ain't Jack Corbis, nor never was!" And, shouldering his pick, the captain of the mine walked away with a heavy tread towards the shaft, grumbling to himself between the puffs of his pipe.

By the time Bell had reached the village at the foot of the Cotera range he had regained his usual composure and self-confidence. Like most intelligent men of a quick, nervous temper, who see the dozen different sides of a question at the same time, he was slow to make up his mind on matters of importance; when,

however, that result had been accomplished, he never wavered, but threw his whole energy into the attempt to reach his end. He was still too young to be hampered by the record of partial or doubtful successes, for whatever success he had achieved in life was still too recent to have been diminished by the perspective of time; and without being exactly conceited, he was yet keenly appreciative of his own talents. Moreover, he knew from experience that the day before the ordeal the nerves are more sensitive to its imaginary formidableness than on the day itself when the struggle has begun. He also felt that he was fighting for no more than his right, and had not read a sufficient number of Russian novels to know that if might is right, right is not always might. So that, on the whole, he felt tolerably confident of success.

When, two months before, he had come down to Mexico to take charge of the Cotera property, this had been handed over to him by his predecessor, a middle-aged, uneducated Cornishman, who had conceived an immediate and violent dislike to the refined, well-read young American. In his farewell speech to the men he had found it expedient, after expressing his satisfaction at the efficient way in which they had served him, to regret that "that Yank from New York" should have been sent down to boss them, and to hope that under such a questionable leadership they might not become demoralized. Bell, as it happened, did not come from New York; but he had been sent down from there by the office, and in Mr. Harris's ingenuous mind all Yankees hailed from either New York or San Francisco, according as they belonged East or

West. Moreover, the lurking contempt of the great West for the daily increasing "effeteness" of the Atlantic slope was satisfied in the summary description of the young man's "size," as was also the Cornishman's dislike of the American. In such remote communities as this mining-camp, where the principles of right and wrong are variable and determined by the caprice of the moment, the jingle of a word often outweighs its sense. So in this case, without stopping to reflect, the men, pleased by the phrase "that Yank from New York," adopted it as a characteristic definition of their leader. Half unconsciously, to be sure, but none the less absolutely, the Yankees, and then the Cornishmen, began to talk deprecatingly of the new boss; before long the Mexican employees discovered their superiority; and as nothing is more contagious than demoralization, the very Indian miners, for the first time in the recollection of their existence, realized that their views should be represented and receive due consideration. Naturally enough, these different parties interfered with one another, and disorder ensued. Bell was sufficiently well aware of the fact that things were going wrong; but being a young and inexperienced man in a new country, the language of which he spoke as yet but indifferently, he had only recently understood the real cause of the trouble. "Gangrene —amputation," he said to himself. "That is clear enough; but where shall we amputate, and how?" These questions had kept him awake all night, and, as he rode under the great spreading poplars along the bed of the *arroyo*, he wondered whether the operation would prove successful. The dismissal of the Mexican

officers, which he had resolved to accomplish that very day, was the most difficult problem to solve without exciting such personal animosities as might lead to bloodshed, and it was chiefly on this point that he was going to ask Garcia's advice.

When Bell entered the office, Don José-María rose from his desk and greeted him warmly; then he led him across the orange-planted court-yard into his private room. "Deign to enter this, your own house, Señor Bell, and allow me to ask permission to absent myself a few moments—yes? Meanwhile you will throw off the heat of the sun. I send some refreshment at once."

Within a few minutes he returned, drew up his chair, and, crossing his hands over his waistcoat, said, in his low, caressing voice, "Well, Don José, what can I do to serve you to-day?"

Bell told him the story in detail, wondering the while whether this polite little man, with features of feminine delicacy and beauty, and soft dark eyes, could really be the same Garcia whose bravery and ferocity had become legendary in the district. It seemed impossible; and yet at times, notwithstanding the pleasant expression of his smile, a hard, brilliant glitter, like that of a snake's, would for a moment come into his eyes. He listened attentively without moving or interrupting the speaker until Bell asked him what he should do under the circumstances.

"You must do what is right," he answered, with a slight shrug of the shoulders and gently tapping his thumbs together.

"Yes, Don José-María; but what *is* right?"

Garcia shrugged his shoulders again more energetically as he replied: "Every man has his own appreciation of what is right, and in your position your honest decision will be the best. You have made up your mind as to what you have to do; now do it. That is the best advice I can give you. I would suggest, however, that in the case of the Mexicans, you allow them to resign instead of dismissing them; and, whatever the provocation may be, *don't shoot.* Some relative or other is sure to spot you in time. I could have him caught and sent—for the matter of that, along with his whole family—up to the *campo santo.* But what satisfaction would you derive from that if you were also in the graveyard? Believe me, Don José, don't shoot. It is sometimes worth while to control one's most legitimate desires. Now come in to dinner, and stay here for the *siesta* before riding back to the mine. The sun must be hot on the road to-day, is it not?"

They went out, and as they walked slowly across the cool *patio* towards the dining-room, Don José-María asked, in a casual way, "You live in New York when you are at home?"

Bell laughed aloud, and tore a sheet out of his notebook. "In case anything should happen to me," he answered, writing down the direction, "you can telegraph to this address. But I don't think it will be necessary."

"*Quien sabe?*" the other replied, seriously, and pitching his voice in a high key. "Things develop more rapidly here than in the North. But, Don José, allow me to say a word to my brother, who is standing

under the portico, and I am with you in ten minutes." When Bell was out of ear-shot, Garcia beckoned to his brother, the doctor, and after a short "good-day," he said to him: "Do not go out to-night, Alfonso, and keep a couple of mules saddled after seven. You may be wanted at the Cotera; but say nothing about it, please." Then he followed his guest into the dining-room.

It was nearly four o'clock when, having shaken hands for the last time with Don José-María, Bell turned his face homeward. The great heat of the day was past, and a gentle breeze blew through the silvery shivering foliage of the poplars, and lifted the feathery branches of the *sabínas*, that undulated lazily, like delicate sea-weed floating back and forth at each wave-lap. The sun was low, and long blue shadows lay across the red soil of the road. In the distance the mountain-tops stood out in strong blue-and-purple dashes against the fainter whitish blue of the sky, while the nearer rugged peaks of barren rock, striped with red iron lines, shone boldly above the slight mist that was beginning to form at their base. The wide plain, studded with round, full-topped trees, and surrounded by the fantastically shaped hills, made a picture of rare coloring and beauty; yet like all tropical scenery, either because of its lack of animal life or of association with men, it produced a sad impression on the mind, that could never forget its isolation and unimportance in this vast, silent desert.

On this afternoon the impression of intense sadness which Bell could not control may, to a certain extent, have been due to other causes; for, as he rode along

towards what the irony of circumstance temporarily obliged him to call "home," he distinctly recalled his feelings on the day when, but a few weeks before, he had travelled this same road on his arrival, buoyed up by the interest of a first visit and by visions of unprecedented success for the mine during his administration. And these expectations had come to what? Whether attributed to his fault or to his misfortune, the result remained the same; he had no similar previous experience on which to fall back, and his self-conceit was not so sturdy as to absolve him in his own judgment of any unintentional errors. "*Que diable allai-je donc faire dans cette galère?*" he said, aloud, and with a bitter laugh. "Well, for better for worse, I took Dame Cotera; let us see what manner of welcome the shrew bids me to-night — the very night of her taming, too, or I am much mistaken." And so saying he whipped his mule with the reins and galloped up to his office at the mine just as the whistle blew for the men to assemble.

For perhaps half an hour Bell paced his brick floor composing, or rather attempting to compose, his speech; but he had barely begun to make some progress when his boy Torribio, dispensing with the formality of a knock at the door, walked into the room to say that the men were waiting. "I suppose Féliz and I had better each take a lantern, Don Pepe? No? It is half dark already in there; and—I told Féliz to bring his carbine; that will make three with yours and mine."

Bell merely nodded assent, and told the boy to go on ahead. At the last moment, moved by some sud-

den impulse, he threw down his gun and unbuckled his revolver. "They would be of no use to me, any way," he reasoned, as he walked towards the compressor-house, "and I shall be all the stronger for being unarmed. At any rate, it is the best way of following José-María's advice."

As he entered the large room and motioned to the engineer to shut off steam there was a sudden silence, which seemed the more profound for the noisy talking that had preceded it; and the men, who had formed themselves in different groups, all turned curiously towards him. Bell was perfectly calm, but, as he himself felt it, unnaturally so; it seemed to him now that there was little or nothing to say, and, for a moment, the uncomfortable suspicion flashed through his mind that the wrongs of which he was about to complain began and ended in his own imagination. To gain time he looked around, as if to see that all hands were present. Guarding the closed door behind him stood his two *mozos*, leaning on their carbines, and in front of each was a large reflector lantern, throwing a strong light on Bell, who, in his duck clothes, stood out as the most prominent figure in the room. On his right the white miners were drawn up in line, and on the left the mill hands, a quiet-looking set of men. Opposite, and just in front of the bob of the big pump that swung back and forth like a ponderous pendulum, the Mexican employees formed a little group by themselves, their sallow complexions and dark hair contrasting strongly with the ruddy-faced, light-bearded Gringos. In the second rank behind, the native miners and Indians were packed closely, their bronze-brown

skins scarcely lightening the shadow that enveloped them, and their half-closed, glittering eyes, that were all fixed on the boss, gleaming like fire-flies on a dark night. Through the window opposite to him Bell could barely see the light of the lantern on the gallows over the shaft burning quietly, and he tried to fancy that it was like a star close at hand.

As he was about to make an effort to say something —what, he did not then know—one of the small boys who were crowded together outside the window lost his hold and tumbled into the room with a loud cry of dismay, that was answered by a yell from the assembly. This little incident seemed to break the ice: Bell understood it, and every man there felt it; a cloud of good humor seemed to have burst over their heads, and a smile lurked in the corners of their mouths and eyes. "Now is my time," he said to himself, and stepped forward, trembling a little, but on the whole self-possessed and calm.

"Boys," he began, in rather a loud voice, that elsewhere he would scarcely have recognized as his own, "I haven't got much to say to you, but I wish you to understand every word that I do say. For the last two months—in fact, ever since Mr. Harris left us—you seem to have got hold of the idea that there was no boss in this camp. Well, perhaps there wasn't; perhaps you thought that a 'Yank from New York' was too green to stand over you, and maybe you were right. Now, boys, I don't think you gave me a fair show. Why didn't you come to me like men, and say straight out what you had to say, instead of working behind my back to make trouble? Fifty to one, too!

When I knew that I was right I told you what you were to do; and when I was in doubt I asked your advice before deciding what was best. You know that is the truth I am telling you. Well, boys, you've got a boss now—got him to-night—and I am the man. If there's any one here who doesn't like it, he can walk straight out of that door, right now, and come for his time to-morrow."

Bell paused a moment, and stepped aside waiting for an answer; but beyond a volley of oaths, mainly meant to be commendatory, none was forthcoming. He had only an indistinct recollection of the words he had used, but he was distinctly conscious of having won the fight. The worst was over: he had asserted himself, and they had understood that he was right; now he could proceed with his duties, feeling that the better element in the camp was at his back.

When he came forward again his words had already been translated to the natives, and all bent over eagerly to hear what he was going to say next.

"I am sorry," he began, in a lower voice, and hesitatingly—"I am sorry that my first duty should be such a disagreeable one; but I don't see any way of avoiding it. I have noticed that there is a good deal —in fact, too much—ill-feeling between Mexicans and white men here at the Cotera. As yet I cannot say who is wrong or who is right. So to-night I mean to have both sides state their grievances openly, and the facts shall decide. Señor Ponce de León, will you do me the favor to step forward?"

A giant cartridge exploding in the centre of the Mexican group could not have produced a greater com-

motion than did these few words. For a moment all talked at once, gesticulating wildly and in the greatest confusion, while the foreigners looked at one another and winked, much amused at this sudden turn of affairs. Finally, after a short debate, the oldest of the Mexicans advanced towards Bell and cried, angrily:

"Don José! you do not know the customs of this our country. We are *caballeros*, señor, and not to be called to account. We cannot submit to be ranked with laborers and treated as such; and I have the honor, in the name of my colleagues here, and also, señor, in my own, of offering you our resignation."

He bowed low, with an outward, horizontal sweep of his arm, and was just stepping back to join his comrades, when, clear and distinct, the cry of "Fire!" rang out in the still night air, and one of the native miners ran in breathless.

"Don José," he gasped, "the roof where they were retimbering in the Rochin cross-cut has come down, and the timbermen, Don Juan and Don Eduardo, got caught under the rock that fell. I had gone back a moment before, and so escaped most of the dirt; but even before I cleared myself the wood was on fire, and the big supply pile is just on this side of the cross-cut. Mary most holy, save the mine!"

"Jack Corbis!"

"Yes—sir!"

"Are there any air-pipes in that cross-cut? Yes? Then drive the compressor till she bursts. Pick out three men for the first gang with you and myself—axes and picks—and four for the next. That will do. Now come—hurry!"

A minute later they stood on the platform of the open cage, silent but resolute. From below the smoke was beginning to rise, thick and black. In the shaft itself it rolled up slowly, boiled up in round, cushioned clouds, writhing, advancing, and apparently receding again until it reached the collar and shot upward swiftly, climbing the tall gallows and spreading evenly and slowly into a thick, undulating canopy of a pasty consistency that lay like a circular blot against the sky. Bell looked up overhead for the lantern — his star — and it seemed to him that it was burning, dimly but steadily. Once more he turned to Corbis and asked:

"Candles?"

"Yes, sir?"

"Matches?"

"Yes, sir. All ready, sir!"

"Lower away!"

The gong sounded sharply—ding, ding, ding. "*Bueno!*" came back from the engine-house, and they were gone.

At the third level the cage stopped, and they got out to light their candles. The main body of the smoke was creeping along the roof of the drift, but for a foot above the car-track the air was tolerably clear; so they lay down on their sides, holding their candles in one hand before them, and crawled along in the ooze of the floor towards the fire. Their progress was necessarily slow, and for a few minutes nothing was heard but the grunting and panting of the men and the more distant crackling of the burning wood. Then they reached the cross-cut, and a shower of sparks fell over them. The heat became intense,

and at last they were obliged to halt. It looked here as if their task were a hopeless one, yet not one of them thought of going back.

"There ought to be a little water in the unfinished winze close by here, sir," Corbis called out, coughing in the smoke. "If we c'n only reach it, I think we c'n push through. Leastways we c'n try. 'Tain't more 'n five or six fathom to your right, Mr. Bell."

"Come along, then, boys!" Bell cried out, cheerily; and the strange little procession of five crept on slowly, with lowered heads. To them, no doubt, those thirty feet seemed longer than many a weary mile under the hot sun above ground; probably nothing but the feeling of companionship enabled them to reach together the little hole, which not one of them could have reached alone; and silently they let themselves down into the dirty, greasy water, above which the air was fairly free from smoke.

As Bell glanced at the black-streaked faces of his four companions emerging from the metallic-looking surface of the water, he could not help smiling at their ridiculous appearance. "Well," he thought, as he turned from the brightly illuminated drift, where a few yards away a couple of men were probably dying in agony, to the dark hole in which he and his four miners were closely wedged, "I suppose that all through life there is a smile to every tear." Then turning to Corbis: "Jack," he said, "send one of the men back to the station, and let the next gang hurry along. They want to cut a few sets in the drift and plaster the ones nearest the fire with mud. I am going to make a dash ahead, and—if I don't answer your call when you have

counted a hundred, you'll have to come in after me. Here goes!"

He clambered out of the hole, and, raising one arm to protect his face, he plunged into the flames; but he had taken only a few steps when his foot struck something soft on the ground, and he fell forward over the prostrate body of a man. He was partly stunned by the blow, but this rather helped him, for the bite of the fire seemed less sharp, and a moment later he staggered out under his burden. It was Ned Bowles, but whether alive or dead they could not tell; he was bleeding from several wounds, and badly burned. "Take him up carefully, boys," Bell cried, "but hurry. Never mind the smoke this time; get him out sharp, and send some more men to take your place. Now, Jack," he went on, as the others vanished in the smoke, "it's your turn. Yell to me if you want help, and good luck to you, Jack, old man. I'll have to cool off a spell in the water here."

He slid down again into the hole and rested his head on his hands. For a little while he seemed to have lost his power of thought, and even for a moment forgot where he was. In the cool water he experienced a delicious sensation of relief that made him shiver all over, not unpleasantly; then an intense drowsiness came over him. He was on the verge of losing consciousness when, with a loud bellow of pain, Jack rushed out of the fire and slipped into the water beside him.

"John Vinton's in there and alive, Mr. Bell," he shrieked, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered his breath; "but he be under a pile of dirt, and I can't

get him out alone. My God, sorr, but it be hot in there! and there be but little air left. We must hurry. D' ye think ye'll be able to go back with me, sorr?"

"I'm all right again, Jack. Come on!"

And for the second time they disappeared in the flames. But how they worked and struggled and writhed in that furnace; how they tore away the rocks and dirt from over the body of their comrade; and how, between them, they bore him away through that hell of burning timber, they never knew. As they emerged from the cross-cut, slowly and heavily, in a halo of fire, with bent heads and in an agony of pain, they perceived vaguely that the drift was full of anxious men.

"Saved?"

"Saved!"

"Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" And there rang through the stone galleries of the old mine a great burst of joyful sound that vibrated back from the rock faces, rolling away into the lost corners of the abandoned workings and up through the shaft to the surface, where another excited crowd took it up with their shrill, far-sounding Indian voices, and sent the news across the neighboring *cañadas* into the silent mountains beyond. But suddenly it died out as quickly as it had come.

The nervous strain had proved too much for Bell, and now that it was all over his strength abandoned him; he staggered and fell forward, striking his forehead against a sharp stone, and lay there in the drift, quiet and unconscious. They took him up tenderly, and in silence bore their young captain away to his

dwelling on the hillside, where two of the miners sat by his *tarima* to watch until the doctor came. Rough nurses they were, no doubt, but devoted ones; and when at last the doctor told them, "He'll be all right again soon, señores," there was great rejoicing at the Cotera mine.

One evening, some days later, Jack Corbis entered the long room of the boarding-house, where the men were sitting along the benches, smoking and talking quietly. Jack put on his spectacles with an unusually dignified air, as he stepped up to the head of the table and threw down a book on which he laid his giant hand. He looked around over the rim of his glasses, and seeing that all were listening, he said, in a subdued but more impressive tone than usual:

"If there be any man in this camp so tarnation mean 's t' speak of the boss again as 'that Yank from New York,' so help me God, I'll skin him first and heave him down the old shaft for the rats to git their work in on! Now that's clear, ain't it? and I'm ready to begin right now." He waited a little while; but as no one seemed disposed to put his flaying powers to a practical test, he continued, more good-humoredly:

"There be one thing I kind o' wanted to bring to your notice to-night, boys. En that's edyecation. I never took no stock in books ontil quite recently, the other night—the night o' the fire, I mean; 'n it's beginnin' to look to me as though I'd missed the vein—drifted clean through the foot-wall and into country rock; as though I'd been puttin' in my holes like a man—good holes, and in the right spot—but thar won't any ore come down with the dirt. En it's got

to be that in these times minin' ain't what it used to be oncet, no more 'n anythin' else is what it was. A man without edyecation to-day don't stand no show against a man that has. It's like hand drillin' against a three-en-a-half Rand. Mebbe you knowed all that, en mebbe p'r'aps again you didn't. But that ain't neither here nor there. What there's to it is this. It was edyecation made the boss a boss—as good a boss as I want to work for. Now t'other night he jest went right ahead, en we followed him; 'cause he was the best on us, and 'cause we couldn't help ourselves followin' him. In course 't were his edyecation did it. We was good men, every man of us; but he was a good man with a lot of edyecation to him besides, en he come out ahead. That's why. Boys, let's edyecate! When Mr. Bell comes round he'll give us a hand en show us whar' we c'n put in the holes best. But meantime I thought I'd jest make a start, kind o' easy; big print en figgers in a handy size for a man o' my heft—that's what I want to begin with. This book here, that I borrowed in the office jest now, with a mate to it for the night shift, seems 'bout right. Let me spell the name to 't:

"Gregory's 'Anal-y-tical Mechanics, Vol. I.;' en that's the initial monument of my new strike."

IMPRESSIONS OF THE BOAT-RACE

BY NO. 7

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WE are settled in our seats now, bending over our oars, and waiting with a forced, unnatural patience. The intense tingling excitement of the first few minutes is over; a sort of haze seems to have settled over the prospect and softened its outlines, and I am conscious of the impending race only as of a remote, unreal possibility. Little things seem far more important. A fly buzzes lazily past me, and I watch it as it crawls for a moment over Stroke's bare back, and is blown away towards the other boat. The rounded ripples of muscle moving smoothly under the polished skin, shot over with pearly reflections, arrest my attention, and the plaster casts of Canova's boxers in my uncle's hall suggest themselves to my memory. This is a far better torso, I say to myself; then smile at the comparison's inopportunity at this moment; yet, even as I realize this, and as if carried on by acquired momentum, my thoughts run on to Greek statues of athletes which resemble more closely the splendid "anatomy" before me. My own arms look long and unsafe at the joints, and the muscles seem less compact, as if twisted of cords that might suddenly snap.

The idea of their breaking fills me with a passing sense of alarm, just sufficiently acute for me to remember the sensation later, and make me wonder at my trivial absent-mindedness.

Our Cockswain is much more excited than any of us, and his mouth is twitching nervously. "That is bad," I say to myself. "He should be the coolest head on the crew." It seems strange to me that the whole scene should not be more real, and that no one object should stand out more vividly. The crowd on the shore is moving back and forth, calling to us and waving hats or handkerchiefs; but the wind mingles their words together so that we cannot understand them. Moreover, we seem to be severed from them by some invisible barrier, as though we were of a different species. They are totally uninteresting, and I look round at the other boat cautiously out of the corners of my eyes. Their Seven, Stroke, and Cockswain are the only ones I can see clearly, and I feel that they too are eying us cautiously, stealthily. Their coach, in a canoe near them, is giving his final advice, of which only a few disconnected words reach me. They also are curiously uninteresting.

I wonder for what we are waiting. The summer sun is soft and warm, and I feel a delicious glow spreading slowly and evenly over my back and shoulders. The quiet sheet of water, bright with light, stretches away on all sides like a vast metallic mirror, scarcely tarnished by the haze that hangs above it, and in the background the wooded hills look soft and distant. For a moment I feel myself yielding to the sensation of sensuous pleasure which benumbs my whole physical self,

and against which my conscious self feels it its duty to struggle. Apparently we are all sensible to it, for the others, like myself, have unbent a little, and loosened their hold on the oar handles.

Suddenly the call comes, "Now, boys! make ready."

I am trembling a little, and my annoyance at this evidence of emotion is but just tempered by the reflection that the Cockswain's voice was husky and his enunciation indistinct. I even wonder why the impression is not deeper, and yet at the same time I know that in reality my attention, both physical and mental, is intense and most uncomfortable.

Boom! Splash! We are off; and a deep silence seems to have come over us. We are rowing as in a dream; even the Cockswain's hoarse "Now! now! now!" reaches us from a distance. "It is easy work," I think. "Well, of course; we have trained honestly and carefully; things are quite as they should be." We have settled down to a long steady stroke that apparently requires no effort, and the shell is speeding ahead smoothly. I feel the work so light that unconsciously I wish for something to do. I know I must not look round, and I long intensely to do so; but out of the corner of my left eye I can just see the blue shirt of the Cockswain in the other boat bent forward at an angle of forty-five degrees. It must be pretty even, so far. I wonder whether they can be ahead. We have passed the first mile-post, and are rowing mechanically, with perfect ease, obedient to the monotonous, equally mechanical, "Now! now! now!" of our Cockswain, that for some reason or other does not seem to be in time with our stroke. On the banks the

crowd is surging back and forth, winding and unwinding like a great dark snake moving its coils. The hurrahing is growing more distinct, more boisterous, but does not affect us much. We are rowing the race, while they are merely hunching against each other.

The minutes pass slowly, and we slide back and forth, back and forth, like a single part of a great machine. Stroke's back fastens my whole attention; as it moves forward I swing forward too, independently of any effort of will, and I suppose Six is doing the same with reference to me. My eyes seem riveted on a small red spot below his right shoulder-blade, and little by little all else vanishes from my sight. Its alternate motion is my only law. I close my eyes for a moment to break this state of semi-hypnotism, and open them again much relieved. I have entirely forgotten the fact that we are rowing a race, although I am acutely conscious of it; but it seems to be rather a physical than a mental consciousness, and my thoughts are busied with trifles. I wonder at the absence of pain or effort. The men are not panting; we have got our second wind by this time, and the Cockswain has us well in hand.

Now the hurrahing comes more distinct, and I feel that the blue shirt on my left has fallen back a little, but the next moment I doubt it again. Wherever I look the same blue shirt is flapping in the wind, and I dare not glance over my shoulder. The race begins to interest me more directly. I wonder whether we shall win, and by how much. Then I wonder whether Seven in the other boat is passing through a series of sensations at all similar to mine. If I could only look at

him for a moment I should know at once; and, for some reason or other, I believe that it would help me to know, but I dare not look round.

The scene on the bank grows more vivid, the crowd more sympathetic, and its interest in us more personal, more real. A feeling of delight comes over me at being the centre of attraction, a powerful factor in the emotion that sways them. Then the monotony of the work impresses me disagreeably, and the everlasting refrain, "Now! now! now!" jars upon me. We are gliding along, smoothly as before; nothing seems to have changed since we dipped our first stroke, and yet one second I feel as though we had been rowing through eternity, and the next as though the race had not yet begun. Behind us—nearly upon us, they are so close—the tugs are puffing, snorting, and steaming noisily, their decks covered with a clamorous crew, whose excitement contrasts strangely with our own impassibility and measured motion. The two-inch cylinder of spruce between my thumbs suddenly acquires an immense importance; it seems alive, moving, and hot. I notice that my hands are red, and at the same instant catch the gleam of light on the oars of the other crew. It looks as though we were gaining—yes—no—yes—Well, no matter; it is a close race, and not yet time to know anything about the result. We are fresh as when we started. I think we shall win. They are cheering again, and the crowd seems more excited. Behind, the landscape is serene and calm, and the river bosom heaves gently in the light between the diagonals of our swash.

Disconnected reminiscences of my school-days come

back to me, strangely vivid for a second, then suddenly vanish. Jolly songs, pleasant excursions with charming women, and scenes from a trip in a canoe—"Row, boys, row; the rapids are nearing." The Cockswain isn't in time. Oh, damn the Cockswain, anyhow! I am tingling all over, and the blood seems to have rushed to my head. We must be rowing faster, yet I did not notice any change. There is great cheering by the crowd on the bank, and I wonder how we stand. It must be pretty close yet. I realize that the distance is beginning to tell, and a deep sense of weariness comes over me. I wish it were all over. The seconds crawl along as slowly as minutes, and now I *know* that we have been rowing an eternity.

Hullo! here's something new. Surely we are spurting. Already? That is a mistake; too soon altogether; we shall never stand it. Why, we have only just passed the third mile. I guess it is all right, though; the Cockswain knows what he's about. Then a blank, and a momentary interest in the small spot on Stroke's back, and again I fall to contemplating the strip of oar handle between my thumbs, and again the blue shirt in the other boat comes within my view. It is falling back. Hurrah! we are pulling ahead—we have got the race! What is that, now? They are spurting too, and seem fresher than we are. There is no doubt about it; they are forging ahead slowly but surely. Inch by inch the other Cockswain is disappearing—disappearing. Now he's gone. They must be half a length ahead. The cheering has become wild, and it is nearly all on the other side. Our Cockswain is terribly excited. Well, we must fight it out, to win or lose, as

well as we can. A feeling of utter despair comes over me for a moment; then I set my teeth with a dogged determination to win or die, and I feel that every man in the boat has tightened his grip on the oar, and is preparing for a supreme effort. My thoughts become clearer, and I am more quiet; we are speeding up, and the Cockswain is sharply barking at us, "Now! now! now!" faster than before.

Row! of course we will row. Here we are, eight of us, rowing for our very life—ready for anything.

Ave Cæsar, morituri te salutant! The thought does not seem ridiculous now. With his wizened face drawn up in one great gasping wrinkle, that yells at us, "Faster! faster! faster!" when we are going as fast as we can, the little man seems truly an imperator clamoring for our hearts' blood. We'll go up to a hundred if he keeps on; we must be rowing eighty now. Eighty? what humbug! I am losing my head. If it is forty we are doing tremendous work.

The pace is telling—telling terribly. Well, never mind; it can't last forever, and I'll stand it while I can. I had rather die than give in. Our men are cheering now; we must be pulling up. I can't look round. The little spot on Stroke's back is all I can see, going back and forth like a black speck in my eye after looking at the sun.

Visions of the fighting on Lake Erie suddenly come up before me, mingled with patriotic sentiments—the Stars and Stripes, "Don't give up the ship," and all the melodramatic humbug and hurrah of legendary history. Well, why not? I am not ashamed of it, and at the thought I feel a hot glow pass all over me.

That everlasting refrain, "Now! now! now!" is becoming madly exasperating.

"Now, boys!"

Stroke's back is moving faster and faster. I am conscious that my arms are weakening, and my leg muscles have lost their elasticity.

"Now! now! now!"

My God! does he know what he is doing? It is perfect agony. Stick to it, my boy; he is right, and we shall win yet. The cheering is increasing, and we are moving faster and faster, and yet faster. I am growing dizzy and faint, my eyesight blurred, and the blood is beating hard and sharp in my temples. Surely, surely that is the blue shirt again creeping back into sight. I see it distinctly now. Hurrah! and we are rowing faster still. The cries are deafening, the cheering wild, and all grows confused and hazy—then an absolute blank.

A moment later and all is quiet. The race is over, and we are lying over our oars half fainting. A feeling of great relief comes over me, then of contentment, then of exuberant, intoxicating joy. I wait a moment before looking up; and now I feel calm again and happy. We have won!

WHY THEY SHUT DOWN AT THE HIGUERITA

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I

ONE hot day, about the beginning of June, Jack Holt, superintendent of the Higuerita and Rochin mines, was bending over his drawing-board in the little iron-roofed stone building that stands on the divide between the Ranchito and the Rochin cañons, when the girl Masima lounged in noiselessly, and asked, in her usual plaintive voice:

"Don Juan, do you wish to eat?"

"Is it twelve yet, Masimita?" he asked in turn, without looking up from his work.

"*Quien sabe, señor?* The whistle has not yet sounded, and the clock says it is past twelve—see!"

"Wait a minute, little one," he said, "and I will tell you." Holt finished his work quickly, and, lighting a fresh cigar, he leaned back in his chair to enjoy the peculiarly delightful feeling of satisfaction which invariably follows the completion of any task. Masima had seated herself on a trunk at the foot of the *tarima*, and was looking up at the clock with that expression of patient resignation and suffering common to all the women in Sonora, but in her face this characteristic

sadness was intensified to such a degree as to strike even the most unobserving. Poor lonely little thing! Life so far had meant to her but suffering and sorrow; and just as she imagined the plain beyond the sierra to be the continuation of the one that lay before her, she thought of the future only as the morrow of the day—another day similar to this in every way. The misery of her past, if such a young thing can be said to have a past, was too recent for her to have forgotten it, or to believe that the relatively comfortable life she was now leading was more than a temporary respite. The dreamy future was still before her—a future of semi-starvation, hard work, and obedience to some cruel, brutal master, who would kiss or beat her as his passions moved him.

Although the legality of his title to them might have been questioned in more civilized communities, Masima and her grandmother, Trinidad, were in some sort the personal property of Mr. John Burgess Holt, of Salem, Massachusetts, to whom they had been bequeathed a few months before. While he was surveying one day on the Ranchito flat, his *mozo* told him that a woman lay very ill in one of the neighboring adobe huts, and that he ought to go in and see if nothing could be done for this unfortunate. The doctors had declared themselves incompetent to cure or even relieve her; but Don Juan was a man who knew much about instruments and chemicals. Perhaps — who knows?—he might have something in the laboratory. If he could do nothing, why, of course, no one else could; but she would be sure then that she really was dying, and as Christians did not die more than once—

that was the truth!—it was best that they should have time to prepare themselves.

The miners and their women often came to Holt for relief, which was usually afforded by a pill or a plaster, and he felt that it was now expected of him not only to visit the sick in his immediate neighborhood, but also to cure them, if God were willing that they should be cured. So he left his instruments with Féliz, and walked over to the house which the boy had pointed out to him.

There seemed to be three women in the miserable, dark, and bare adobe room, from which all but a few empty boxes, used as chairs, and some cracked earthenware, had been removed. In the corner by the door stood the usual forked-tree stump that supports the water *olla*, fragments of which were lying on the ground, and one of these now served to catch the drippings from the leaky old powder-keg which had replaced it. The stone *metate*, with its smooth brick for grinding the tortilla paste, lay outside in the little bamboo enclosure, covered with loose brush, which was the kitchen; it had evidently not been used that day, and the low mud-oven to which he put his hand was perfectly cold. Holt entered on tiptoe, and sat down on a candle box beside the *tapeste* stretched across two logs, and on which the sick woman lay, curled up with pain, and groaning; the other two crouched on the ground in the farther corner, crying softly, as do those who have lost all hope. He soon recognized that there was nothing to be done beyond making the poor creature's last days as comfortable as possible; so he had the family moved up to the mine to a cabin near his

own, where he could see himself that they were taken care of.

A few days after their removal the watchman woke him late in the night, and said that Concepcion wished to see him at once.

"I am dying, Don Juan," she said to him, as he sat down beside her. "I shall be dead before light."

Holt felt that she was right; he wished to reassure her, but the words failed him. There was a peculiar, far-seeing expression in her eyes which moved him strangely, and he was ill at ease under their watchful scrutiny. He felt the invisible presence of death near him, and without answering he looked down thoughtfully at the parched, transparent little hand, no larger than a child's, that lay passively on the blanket beside his own. When he raised his eyes Concepcion was crying bitterly. "Oh, Don Juanito," she sobbed, "you do not say no! I am dying, and you let me die! Say no, Don Juan—say no, not yet!" But presently she grew more calm, as he stroked her forehead. "No; you are right," she continued, sadly. "What could you do, then, against the will of God? Words—words! not more. I must die—yes, surely yes, it is coming soon." Then she sank back and lay motionless, with her eyes closed, for nearly half an hour, until, thinking she had fallen asleep, Holt rose to go to his room; but she called him back before he had reached the door.

"I must speak to you, Don Juan," she said. "It is the last opportunity. Give me a little wine, and sit down—not there, here, where I can see you. I did not tell you before, because, perhaps, if you had known, you would not have been so kind to the little one."

And in the dim light that illumined the bare little room on the last hour before her death she told him the sad story of her life: her sins, and their expiation; and how, when he had found them a few days before, they were starving by order of the village president, to whom she had refused to sell her daughter. The neighbors knew it, and took advantage of their weakness to steal what little they owned before; that day their last hen had disappeared. Her child's father she had never seen, never even known by name; through life she had struggled bravely, but unsuccessfully, for the crime that had made her a mother had at the same time destroyed her health. None had ever befriended her before, and, having nothing else to give, she bequeathed her daughter and mother to the only man who had been kind to her.

At sunset the next day, four miners carried the little pine coffin, covered with black indienne and bound with white tape, down the winding path that led to the village graveyard; and Holt accepted the legacy, glad in the isolation of this desert to feel once more the responsibilities and obligations of a family, without which man goes down the stream of life adrift like a loose log. When his work was over for the day, he turned to this wrinkled little old woman of forty-two and to this child of twelve for a semblance of home affection. They were mere pretexts, of course, but their reality as human beings furnished sufficient ground for his imagination to work on; and before long he became sincerely attached to his little girl, whom he taught to read and tell the time by the clock. It would have been difficult for him to say in what light he looked on Masima:

she was too young to be a friend, too old to be a child, and the existence of his own family in the East sternly precluded the consideration of any other near relationship. For some unexplained reason, the idea of being a schoolmaster or tutor to this pupil was extremely repugnant to him; so he concluded to class her in a general way among the Mignons and himself among the Wilhelm Meisters of a more modern and realistic epoch; he felt, moreover, quite satisfied with the unromantic, practical nature of their surroundings, which rendered superfluous the dissertatious philosophizing of their prototypes.

As he leaned back in his chair and looked at the little thing on the trunk, it occurred to him for the first time that the rapid development of life in these tropical countries would render a *status quo* in their relations of comparatively short duration. Masima was as yet a child, but in less than a year she would become a woman, and numerous complications hovered over the horizon. Holt had a momentary but deep glimpse into the perplexities that beset the father of a marriageable daughter, and the suggestion of possible interviews on the subject was in itself so ludicrous that he laughed aloud at the idea.

Masima turned and looked at him with a puzzled, half-reproachful expression, wondering why Don Juan was laughing at her, which seemed to be the natural inference; then, with the unreasoning sympathy which characterizes childhood, she laughed too, without knowing why.

Her laugh was singularly frank and low, dying away softly into a faint ha, ha! that seemed to be its own

echo, and to linger long after her red lips had closed over the small sharp teeth, white as those of a wolf, but lacking the pearly reflections which would have made them beautiful. She was not pretty, certainly, although a little retouching of nature's scraper might have made her so, and the first glance at the sad little creature was disappointing; yet one was unwilling to accept this disappointment as a final result, and looked again, wondering unconsciously why, in spite of its insignificance, her face had called forth something akin to the sense of pleasure always produced by the contemplation of the beautiful. Her features, such as they were, belonged to the Central American type, in which the nose looks aquiline in profile and flattened in full face. Her eyes were of a light-gray color, such as is not uncommon among the Mayos, rather large than small, with narrow lids, rimmed above and below with dark lashes that met at the corners and gave them a slightly slanting look. Her hair was neither fine nor coarse, but flexible, and full of little ripples too short and abrupt to be called curls; at Holt's suggestion, but utterly indifferent herself as to the effect produced, she wound the two long plaits into a heavy coil, under which her clear olive skin looked no darker than the leaf of a tea-rose. Her hands and feet were small, and exceedingly well-shaped, even for an Indian. She held herself straight and walked gracefully, in spite of the loose, sack-shaped jacket which she had outgrown, and the straight-falling, wrinkled cylinder of black cloth. which she naïvely fancied was a skirt. The only evidence of coquetry which Holt had ever noticed in her was shortly after her mother's death, when she begged

him to buy her a gold ring, and with this she would play for an hour at a time, sometimes looking up to ask whether it was "real gold, pure gold," and evidently attaching more importance to the standard of the metal than to the delicacy of the workmanship.

As Holt said nothing, but merely smiled, she bent her head and began twisting her ring; then she loosened her *rebozo*, readjusted it, and threw her head back, holding the ends of the shawl straight out before her. Her lips were parted, and between them the bright line of her teeth glistened in the sunlight, which made her half close her eyes as she looked at her master seriously, even solemnly.

"Don't you want to eat, Don Juan?" she asked again.

"Tell me first what time it is," he said, pointing to the clock on the wall.

She stood up and put the forefinger of her left hand at XII on the dial, and began counting the minutes, one by one, with the other.

"That is twelve o'clock; that is fifteen, sixteen, seventeen minutes. Twelve o'clock and seventeen — is that right?" and she looked at him interrogatively over her shoulder.

"Yes, that is right, Masimita; you can bring the meat at once," he answered, and went out into the cotton-screened veranda, where he took his meals during the rainy season. Eating was a monotonous, wearisome duty this hot weather, and the daily menu of *frijoles* and *tortillas*, with an occasional box of sardines, was ill calculated to stimulate a failing appetite, so that he looked upon his food as a medicine to be taken, *nolens volens*, three times a day.

Things were running smoothly at the mine, and the daily routine of duty was becoming so tedious to him that he craved for a little excitement of any kind to vary the monotony of this life. The same smooth routine existed below at the mill in Aduana, and the entertainment afforded by Alamos was neither very interesting nor very elevating. As he sat before his plate of beans, Holt reflected that he had signed a three years' contract, and the hopeless isolation and dreariness of the existence which he must lead for at least two more years fairly appalled him. Hitherto his work had been so severe and engrossing that he had suffered but little from the intellectual isolation of his position; but he had had ample opportunities for appreciating how complete it was. In the whole of the surrounding country there was but one man of his years who could ever be a companion to him, and he was at work for a Mexican firm more than forty miles away, so that they could meet only at rare intervals. This Krisch was a German, an old Freiberger, as was also Holt, and it gave both these young exiles from the North a deep pleasure to talk over old days and "home." Isolated as they were in the great desert of Sonora, they had soon become good friends, and in each other's company forgot that they were but two. But to-day Holt was alone, and felt astounded and frightened at the relentless simplicity of the life to which he was doomed. Intellectual privation is harder to bear than physical hardship, and if man is materially attracted by vacuum, mentally he shrinks from and abhors it. The effects of absolute absence of sound, of light or motion, with which Holt had experimented upon himself below-ground, seemed

insignificant now when compared with those likely to follow a two years' severance from all intellectual life, and he could not but liken his existence during these long months to come to the slow, toilsome crossing of the barren plain which he could see stretching away before him, unbroken and silent, to the dim range of bluish hills behind which were civilization and home.

He was aroused from the contemplation of these dreary vistas by the sound of Masima's voice. "You do not eat, Don Juanito. Are the *frijoles* not good?"

"No, child," he answered, absently. "Take them away. I do not care for any to-day. Why didn't you give me some eggs?"

"*No hay, señor.*"

"There aren't any? Why not?"

"Why, the hens don't lay in the waters, Don Juan."

"And is there no meat?"

"No, señor; they have not killed this month. Shall I make you some *tomales?*"

"Never mind now, little one; you can keep them for supper. Bring me the coffee."

Masima went into the kitchen, and came back with the coffee-pot in one hand and in the other a revolver, which she held away from her, shuddering, as if the reflections from the nickel plating had been the gleam of a snake's eye.

"I am afraid," she said, with a nervous little laugh, as she laid it down on the table. "But I want to know how to load and clean the pistol. Show me."

"And what for do you want to know that?"

Masima looked out of the window for a few moments before replying; then she turned and said, quietly, "For that."

"That is no answer, little one. Come, tell me why you want to know."

The girl hung her head and looked down without speaking; then she took up the pistol, and said, in an entreating tone, "Show me, Don Juanito."

Holt was puzzled, for the girl had never spoken to him so earnestly before. She was not given to capricious whims, and it was evident that now she had some definite object in view. It was equally clear that no amount of questioning would make her disclose what she refused to tell of her own free will. He was conscious of a vague presentiment of impending catastrophe, which, however, vanished from his mind even before it had had time to translate itself into an impression. There seemed to be no reason why he should not teach her to clean his fire-arms as well as his instruments; she was very careful and skilful with her fingers, and he apprehended no danger of accident from carelessness. So he granted her wish, and in half an hour she had learned to empty, load, and take to pieces his Merwin & Hulbert revolver and his Winchester carbine with a precision and rapidity which astonished him. With this, however, she was not satisfied, but ran into the office and brought him his Evans rifle. Holt began to think that her object was a more serious one than he had at first supposed, and asked her once more to tell him what she meant to do with the "irons."

"No, no, Don Juan; show me this one too," she answered, in a low voice hoarse with suppressed emotion. She had thrown off her *rebozo*, and was leaning over, with her elbows on the table and her chin resting

on her upturned palms; a bright-red spot glowed on her cheek under each eye; one of her braids had become loosened, and with a quick gesture she drew it across her mouth and held it there with her fingers half buried in the thick black coil.

The rifle was rusty, so he unscrewed the sliding joint to oil the bearing surfaces, Masima meanwhile following his movements with the quick, concentrated watchfulness of a cat, and moving her fingers very slowly back and forth one against the other. When he noticed her nervous condition he laid the screw-driver down, and, more to see what the effect would be on the excited little savage than because he expected an answer, he said, in a careless way, "If you don't tell me, Masima, I shall put it away without showing you how it works. What do you want to do with the rifle?"

For a moment she said nothing, then flashed her eyes suddenly up into his, and cried the single word, "*Matar!*"

Holt's first impulse was to burst into laughter at this exhibition of childish ferocity; but there was something in the savage gleam of her eye which stopped him. Her tense lowered brow cut off the upper part of the iris squarely, and the shrunken pupil stared at him very fixedly and very viciously, cold, bright, and glittering like the gaze of a *burila* about to strike—a comparison that was strengthened by the slanting lines diverging backward from the root of the eyebrows, and the effect of which was apparently to flatten the forehead. A slight twitching sharpened the curves of the short upper lip, beneath which the

"What do you want to do with the rifle?"

little pointed teeth glistened suggestively, while the small hands were cramped like the talons of a bird of prey over the braid of hair that lay on the table.

Before he could sufficiently recover from his surprise to express himself in words, there was a jingle of spurs outside and a sharp rap at the door. Masima suddenly regained her usual quiet manner, and passed out lazily, as Alejo, Mr. Tracy's private *mozo*, entered the room without waiting for an answer. He wasted no time in unnecessary polite formalities, but handed a crumpled paper to Holt, and said the mules were ready. Then he untwisted the ends of a cigarette, emptied the contents into his hand, smoothed the paper, and rolling up the tobacco with a single quick jerk of his thumbs, he asked Don Juan for a light.

The letter was from Mr. Tracy, the general manager, and its style, like the bearer, lacked "effete" polish or adornment.

"DEAR JACK,—Send down every white man you've got; five sharp; engine-room at the mill. Get ready to start for a week's journey; leave from the mine with the moon to-night: four *mozos*. Come down at once. Hell to pay! TRACY."

Holt read the letter through twice; there could be no mistake about it. If Tracy said there was hell to pay, the news must be important and serious. So he sent Alejo at once down to the shift-house to transmit the orders, and was about to call Masima, when she walked into the room and came up to him.

"You want me, Don Juan?" she asked, without looking at him.

"Yes, child. I am going away to-night for a few days. Will you get my things ready?"

"Where are you going, Don Juanito?" the girl asked, clasping her hands.

"*Quien sabe, chiquita!* But that does not matter to you; you will have a holiday. Are you glad?"

"And you are coming back, Don Juan—quite sure you are coming back?"

"Why, of course I am coming back. But what is the matter?" he asked, struck by the curious way in which she had looked at him.

"*Nada, señor.*" She hesitated a moment; then, coming up quite close to him, she looked into his eyes and added, in a whisper, "Don't pass near Baballahui."

"Why, what do you mean, Masima?" Holt asked, surprised at this warning. But she sprang away from him quickly and ran out of the room. There was no time to lose; so he did not follow, but buckled on his spurs, and vaulted on to the mule which Alejo was holding outside. "The girl knows something evidently," he said to himself as he rode away; "and in this country it is wise to accept the advice of the natives, absurd as it may often seem. Where is Baballahui, anyway?" he asked of Alejo, as they rode down the winding path that leads to Aduana.

"Below Navajoa, Don Juan; 'way down on the Mayo, in the Indian country."

"Indian country!" Holt gave a prolonged whistle as the truth suddenly flashed across his mind. "The Mayos must be rising. *Picacho!* that looks serious." With a quick movement he drove the spurs into Panchita, who dashed off at a gallop over the rocky road, and a few minutes later he pulled her up, covered with foam, in the patio of the hacienda.

As he entered the office, Mr. Tracy stopped in his nervous race from wall to wall of the large, red-tiled apartment, and held out his hand. "I'm glad to see you, Jack," he said. "How are you? Take a cigar and sit down. Did you notify the men? Good! Now to business."

While Holt was shaking hands with Don Agustin Salcevedo and his brother Guadalupe, who had ridden in from the river with the news, Tracy unfolded a large map of the State of Sonora, and spread it out on the table before them. He was a short, well-knit man of fifty, with hard, bright-blue eyes, whose expression never softened, and a quick, energetic manner which the men liked well. He had formerly served in the frontier cavalry, and had there acquired the habit of speaking abruptly, in a loud, distinct tone of command, which made even his "good-morning" sound like a peremptory order. In spite of this outward hardness, he was a good, just man, of relentless integrity, and great yet not reckless intrepidity. Life was short, and he had no time to waste, strange as this might seem to the Mexican gentlemen, whose phlegmatic indifference was to him a source of perpetual wonder and irritation. "I was born alive, and the best of those fellows," he used to say, speaking of his Spanish friends, "was raised in some kind of an incubator. However, they are in their own country, and you must let them do things in their own way. Their governor is set for low speed, and you can't hurry them any more than you can a mule. Dig the spurs in, and the cussèd animal will come to a full stop."

"Look here, Jack," he began, after weighting down

the corners of the map with specimens of ore, and pointing to the space enclosed between the Gulf of California and the Yaqui and Mayo rivers, "it isn't a long story: the Indians are rising *en masse*, and in less than a fortnight they will have walloped all the troops in the state, and be dancing a fandango on the plaza of Alamos. They want to pass over the hill yonder and take us in on the way. I've been thinking for some time past that that was their game, and when they call I'm going to plank down a straight flush. Our friends here say it's no use, and advise us to move into town and join the troops. What do you think of it?"

"Well, Mr. Tracy," Holt answered, cautiously, "if the men will stand, and we have the proper tools, I suppose we run as good a chance of being scalped here as down below. You want to fight, of course—and I guess I'll have to obey orders."

"Good, Jack!" Tracy answered, quickly; "I knew you would. Gentlemen," he continued, turning to the Mexicans, whose stolid faces showed neither approval nor criticism, "we'll risk it. Now you tell us all you know and give us the points."

While the officers of the company were discussing their plans, the men straggled in from the mine in small parties of five or six, and lounged around the engine-room, waiting for the appointed hour. Many of them had been in the country a long time, and had learned that patience was a necessity. There was little if any excitement, except among the Cornishmen fresh from the "ol' countary," and little talking, for the regular monotonous pounding of the stamps rendered

all conversation difficult. Moreover, like all men who have lived together, a small community cut off from all intercourse with the outer world, they had little or nothing to say to each other. Their interests and feelings were all more or less the same, and the exciting incidents developed by the routine of a well-regulated mining camp are few, and usually disposed of in a few words. Perhaps it was owing to the imposing silence of the landscape, perhaps also to a certain sense of isolation which all recognized in a greater or lesser degree, or perhaps to the strange, inexplicable atmosphere of prudery which miners are apt to draw around their former life, but sustained conversation at the Higuerita had never been encouraged. The men seemed content to sit together, for the most part silent, and smoke their pipes in philosophic indifference. In this country they tacitly recognized their absolute insignificance as mere individuals; for action it was imperative that they should form a combined party. The elements, the country itself, the population, and the conditions of life in their surroundings were all hostile factors in their struggle, and the odds were by far too long for any single man to battle against. So they waited calmly for the appearance of their chiefs, without troubling themselves to discuss eventualities of which they were totally ignorant.

At a few minutes before five the stamps were hung up and steam shut off. The large fly-wheel of the engine, carried on by its own impetus, made a few more uncertain turns, hesitated, and finally stopped altogether. The whistle sounded shrilly three times, and as the quavering, sibilant echo lost itself among the

neighboring cañadas the men in the engine-room fell apart in two distinct groups, miners and mill hands, each headed by its respective boss. Mr. Tracy, Holt, and the other officers walked up between them, and occupied the engineer's platform.

"Boys," Mr. Tracy began at once, in his clear, determined voice, "I have called you together to ask you to stand by me. The Indians are rising between the rivers and are coming this way. There are hardly any troops between us and them, so that it is merely a question of a few days. But the governor has sent reinforcements from the north, and I want to hold out until they arrive. We shall have machine-guns, plenty of provisions, and plenty of ammunition. All we need is men. We put up this plant together, boys; let us stand by it. We made this mine; let us fight for it. However, I want you to understand the situation thoroughly before you answer. It is a matter of life and death. If we are defeated, there will not be a man left to tell the story. There is time yet for you to get away if you're so minded. But I want to know tonight whether you are going or whether you will see me through. I mean to stay if I stay alone."

Lowe, the mill boss, picked up a shingle, and with a piece of chalk in his hand he walked down the line to make his tally.

"The mill is all right, colonel," he cried out, cheerfully. "But, by ——, I'd 'a given any chap who'd 'a wanted to back down such an almighty hidin' he couldn't 'a got away anyhow!"

Meanwhile, Jack Corbis, the boss miner, was quietly plugging his pipe. He had not even turned to look at

his men, and his sole preoccupation seemed to be regarding the quantity of tobacco which judicious compression could induce his cutty to hold.

"Well, Jack?" Holt called out to him.

"In course we'll fight," Jack answered, in a half-apologetic, half-indignant tone, and shrugging his broad shoulders. "And now, boys," he added, turning to face the miners, "three cheers for the colonel!"

When the noise had subsided, the men were conscious of a distinct but at first indefinable change in the moral atmosphere of their life. It was as though a pair of strong magnifying-glasses had suddenly been placed before their eyes, and they had not yet grown accustomed to this new perspective. Immediate objects and details had become painfully, abnormally distinct, while those a little farther removed looked blurred and shadowy. They felt that it was now no longer merely a question of working along, one shift nearer to an ever-receding end, nor of taking up to-morrow the job they had left unfinished to-day. They had three weeks before them, and into these three weeks, for some of them at least, the total remaining energy of their life must be condensed. It was clear to all that they had a new basis in life. In the minds of some this took the form of presentiment. The less superstitious, less imaginative among them merely looked on the issue as a supreme but doubtful one, and avoided applying the result to themselves individually. All, however, felt the necessity of reflecting on this matter seriously; so little was said as they regained their quarters and wondered what plan would be adopted for the defence of the mine.

It was nearly dark when Holt returned to his cabin. A cold supper was laid on the table, but Masima was nowhere to be found, and only the old grandmother answered his calls. She had not seen the girl for some hours. Mr. Tracy had given him orders to start that night with four men to reinforce and hurry along the mule train, now on its way from the north with the guns and ammunition, and he had too many things on his mind to trouble himself then about the girl's whereabouts. So, after seeing that his instructions had been carried out, he kicked off his boots, threw himself on his *tarima*, and in less than half an hour he was sound asleep.

When he awoke, about two o'clock, Alejo was standing by his side, belted and spurred, with his serape wound around him.

"*Ya está, Don Juan,*" he said, in his low but penetrating voice. "The moon is rising."

Holt jumped up, pulled on his boots, and buckled on his revolver, while the boy put on his spurs. As he was leaving the room, Krisch ran in, and, taking him in his arms, kissed him on either cheek.

"*Du,* Dscheck! I'm going with you," he exclaimed, as soon as his lips had finished their osculatory duty. "You don't object to my going?"

Holt rather favored the Anglo-Saxon prejudice against masculine kisses, and grasped his hand warmly. At this juncture nothing could have given him greater pleasure than the appearance of this rosy-cheeked, red-bearded, simple-hearted friend; yet, with the reserve characteristic of his race, he compressed his joy into the somewhat *banal* and cold greeting:

"How are you, old man? I am glad to see you. But, Krisch," he continued, as the opportunity of the latter's arrival struck him, "why are you here? How did you know I was going?"

"I got back to Alamos this evening, just as Don Agustin returned from Aduana," the other answered, "and he told me the whole story. I thought if there was any fighting I might as well be here with you as alone in town with the Mexicans, so I rode back to the mill. Tracy said you were going off with the moon, and I thought to myself so: 'Caramba! I'll go with Dscheck!' and here I am."

"You know it's a dangerous ride, Krisch; we may get caught, and that will be the end of it."

"Na! You're going, and if it comes to—to— I'd rather be with you, Dscheck."

Holt pressed his hand again, and they went out into the soft moonlight that flowed in like a solemn tide over the crest of the Frailes. This little plateau, barren as it was, had, after all, been his home for more than a year, and now for the first time he experienced a feeling of sadness at leaving it. It occurred to him that he might never see it again, and he turned to look once more at the simple whitewashed house, his *chez-moi*, and at the silent cabins of the miners up on the Libertad Hill. As he stood there, something moved in the shadow of the veranda, and he called out, "Is that you, Masima?"

"*Si, señor*," the girl answered, coming forward. "And you are already going away, Don Juanito?"

"Yes, little one. Will you come with me?"

"You will say, Don Juanito. I would go."

Holt was moved. Perhaps it was only that the sadness which he could not shake off sought expression in some form distinct from inarticulate speech; or perhaps the impropriety of retaining in his possession the labial demonstrations which Krisch had implanted on his cheeks suggested a transfer; but whatever the motive, he gently wound his hand among the black braids under the girl's *rebozo*, drew her head back, and kissed her.

"*Adios, Masimita!*" he cried, as he vaulted into the saddle.

"*Vaya con Dios, Don Juan!*" she answered, softly; and in single file they rode out into the deep shadow which the Higuerita threw over the Rochin Valley.

At this early hour nothing moved in the silent landscape, checkered with strong lights and shadows; the night was cool, and in the cañadas, where a slight mist hung in the mesquite branches, the air was heavy with the sweet perfume of the papaches and the more pungent fragrance of the romeria. From time to time, as their *tapaderas* caught in the dry hollow thorns of the mautos and shook their feathery branches, a startled cow would jump to her feet heavily and gaze for a moment at the riders with her large sad eyes, then break away noisily through the brush; or a frightened chupilote, suddenly awakened by the clink of the mules' shoes on some loose stone, would sail away from his perch on a fluted *hecho* column to another farther off, and all grew silent again and still as before.

Dawn was breaking when they reached level ground and put their mules to a trot along the Navajoa road.

They were now nearing the Indian country, and Holt sent two *mozos* ahead as a vanguard; the other two rode behind, while Krisch and he cantered along between them. It may have been that these precautions made the presence of danger seem more real, or perhaps it was only the influence of the chilly grayness of early dawn, but certainly both Jack and his companion began to realize that this was a very different ride from any they had taken before. They were not afraid, yet the nervous restlessness from which even old soldiers are not exempt before the battle has begun is something akin to animal fear. The dismal bark of the coyote in the prairie seemed doubly dismal and foreboding. Visions and recollections of home would suddenly force themselves irrelevantly upon their thoughts with a strange vividness, then as suddenly vanish, leaving behind them a feeling of uncertainty that was only intensified by the wild beauty and the loneliness of the silent country through which they were riding. Nothing moved as they passed through the ranchos along the road, and no sound came from the corrals but the whining bark of some half-coyote cur skulking behind the long lines of pack-saddles set up side by side like a gallery of little Gothic arches. Beneath the porches men, women, and children slept together with their pigs and hens; and outside, under the large full-topped mesquites, the *arrieros*, wrapped in their blue and white serapes, lay on the bare ground in picturesque groups, just as they had fallen the night before. Along the banks of the stony *arroyos* tall sabina-trees fluttered their little feathery fern-shaped leaves in the blue-gray light that in the

east was tinged with purplish reflections, and poured the heavy dew-drops on to the star-shaped leaves of the palma-christi through which the mules pushed their way slowly. Suddenly a cock crowed in the distance, a heron rose heavily from the reeds near them, and as they reached the Mayo the sun burst forth gloriously over the eastern horizon, scattering a cloud of gold-dust over the mist that lay on the river, and sounding nature's mighty reveille. In an instant the whole scene changed, and life awoke noisily. The mules threw up their heads and plunged into the river; the riders sat up in the saddle and pulled at this strap or that. Mottled jack-rabbits, with soft pink ears standing upright, ran along before them, and stopped suddenly with a jerk behind some stone to gaze at the passing horsemen, and a thousand birds chattered and sang in the thicket that but a moment before was silent and dead. All feeling of despondency had vanished, and a healthy gladness drove away the last vestige of fear or fatigue. Krisch looked up, laughing, and called out, "*Du*, Dscheck!"

"What is it?" answered Holt, knowing full well that his friend had nothing to say. "Isn't it glorious? Let's have a gallop."

And sitting far back in the saddle, they held up their reins in their left hand, and, swinging the riata in the right, they gradually disappeared behind the low ridges of the rolling ground.

II

When they returned to the mine a few days later with the guns, the works of defence were being pushed night and day with the utmost energy. All the mill and mine work proper had been stopped; on the surface they were erecting rude revolving turrets of wood, the armor of which had been put together with pieces of the sectional settling-pans bolted to one another. The first of these was placed on the Higuerita crest, and commanded the old shaft, the road to Promontorios, and the pass at the top of the Ranchito Cañada, beyond which the inaccessible Frailes barred the way. The second had been mounted on the stone office, and raked the mine plateau, the Libertad Hill, and the Rochin valley from the vertical wall, four hundred feet high, of the Nacacharamba on the left to the Minas Nuevas road on the right. So long as these positions were held, the Indians could only pass on to Alamos after defeating the troops camped in the Minas Nuevas plain. As a further precaution a large quantity of dynamite had been secreted in a drift near the mouth of the old shaft, and this could be fired by electricity from either of the Monitor turrets. Similar dispositions had been made at the mill in Aduana.

Below-ground all the work was concentrated on driving through the few feet which still remained to connect different portions of the great drain tunnel

that opened into the mill-yard. In the headings, where hitherto they had only been able to handle two drills, the men had now managed to put three, and, doubled up on low temporary platforms, they worked with desperate energy as many hours as they could endure it, when the next shift went on at once. It was indeed a scene from the "Inferno." The heat was intense; and in the dim light of the spluttering candles the drill-men, naked to the waist, looked like ghostly demons in an atmosphere of vapor. Silent themselves and watchful, with feverish eyes and pale, drawn features, they controlled the thunder of the pounding machines, while their dark Mexican helpers, crouching in the shadow below them, watched every movement, every sign, ready to hand up the water, the swab, or a fresh drill. Behind these again a group of Indian boys, entirely naked, threw the loose dirt and rock to others farther on, who loaded the cars; their heavy black hair and glittering eyes; their smooth dark skin shining in the damp atmosphere like polished bronze; their wild yells of encouragement or chaff; and their grotesque contortions as they slipped, fell, and jumped back and forth—all made them seem like writhing demons. And here, a thousand feet below-ground, the reverberating rumble of the rock cars, the sharp, short *t'chah, t'chah*, of the escaping air, the drumming of the drills against the rock, and the pungent, irritating odor of the dynamite fumes, impressed even those accustomed to the "dead sounds" of underground work, and suggested disquieting reminiscences of nightmares or worse. Suddenly it would all cease; for a space the lights were hidden by the men's bodies; a gust of short, an-

gry commands, oaths, and cries, in English, Spanish, or Indian, swept down the drift; a train of loaded cars, followed by the panting men, who stumbled over the stones and rough-laid sleepers, rolled along into the darkness beyond; the gong sounded three times, and all became silent as a tomb. Then a broad flash of reddish flame lighted up the walls; the ground gave a premonitory heave, and with a dull, lingering report a hurricane of stone and rock crashed through the dark tunnel, bounding off the rough surfaces of the walls, and re-echoed far beyond through the deserted workings. Then again all was still until the rushing of the compressed air broke the silence, whistling through the pile of loose "dirt" or flurrying against the breast, and one of the old hands tottered through the red smoke, shielding his candle in the palm of his hand.

"Hepa! Heee-paaah! Hulloa! Come along!" And a few minutes later the men were at work again, sweating, swearing, yelling, and panting, and the heavy drills were thundering at their target.

At last all was ready. The men had become accustomed to their new life, and longed for the Indians to appear. Armed to the teeth, they lounged listlessly around the camp, or through their glasses watched the village of Promontorios, the destruction of which would warn them that the enemy was approaching. Scouts had been sent out, and daily some one or other of them would return and report on the advance of the Indians, some four thousand men, fairly well armed, and bent on destruction.

The idea of attempting to stem the march of so large a body of men with the forces at his command—thirty-

seven white men at the mine and sixteen at the mill—seemed to Holt no less ludicrous than it was heroic; but heroism is apt to appear ludicrous *ante factum*. To the men, however, whose experience in such matters was small, and whose contempt for the Indians was instinctive and supreme, it seemed sufficient to have made up their minds on this matter for the result to be a foregone conclusion. Mr. Tracy was too busy to have any leisure for reflection, and the eventual result of his venture was not a ripe subject for consideration. The next thing to do was to hold the mine; when he had done that, it would be time to go on with the next problem, whatever that might be. Krisch was good-naturedly hopeful, but curiosity was at present the controlling factor in his mind. He had never seen a fight of any description, he had never seen the machine-guns work, he had never stood a siege, and he was mildly excited at being initiated into all these mysteries at once. Lowe, who had once been corralled by the Apaches in Arizona, was probably the only man who fully appreciated the gravity of the situation, and he deemed it wise to keep his reflections to himself. So that, perhaps, as fearless a force of men as the Higuerita miners had rarely before awaited the attack of an overwhelmingly superior foe.

One Sunday morning the lookout on the upper turret reported firing in the neighborhood of Promontorios, and not long after slender spirals of smoke, fanned upward by the swaying flames, proclaimed that the village had been taken. A few hours more and probably their turn would come. There was not a man in the camp who at the thought did not feel a hard lump

in his throat and an accelerated beating of his heart; but such confessions did not seem to be popular, and Krisch alone was simple-minded enough to tell Holt that a *status quo* would be more satisfactory than he had anticipated. It was perhaps fortunate that the men had little leisure to dwell on the horrible side of possible eventualities, for in such moments panics are rumor-born even among the bravest, and this positive evidence of the existence of a foe whom they had hitherto looked upon as more or less imaginary might have produced serious results. When excited, however, men pass naturally from one extreme to the other. So when Polycarpio, one of the Indian scouts, came in and reported the atrocities committed at Promontorios, every vestige of fear vanished before a wild, irrational desire to murder every man of them, to "get at 'em and polish off the black devils as soon as possible."

The Indians had attacked the village at dawn. In less than an hour the few Mexican troops had been surrounded, and all killed or captured. The children were thrown alive into the wells or on to the burning houses, and a little later the fainting women, with broken arms and bleeding breasts, were flung over the wall and into the *arroyo*. When the president and vice-president of the pueblo had been set aside, the remaining prisoners were stripped naked and led to the plaza, on which a layer of the savage prickly-pear boughs had been spread. The skin was then torn from the soles of their feet, and the bleeding wretches made to dance on the spiked *tunas* until they fell exhausted on the bloody carpet. Even then the monsters whipped them with long snake-shaped branches of cactus, and forced

the quivering limbs to make a few more spasmodic contractions before they stiffened in death. A few of the principal citizens, lashed to powder-kegs, were set up as a mark and shot at until they were gone. Then the president and his second, each tied to a plank, were carried out and placed under the ends of a see-saw in such a way that the cross-board would strike their heads gently at each oscillation, and three of the Yaquis slowly danced the life out of them, while the now half-drunken, blood-thirsty crowd yelled for more. Alas! there were no more; and with their machetes they threw themselves upon the mangled bodies, and hacked this bleeding mass of humanity into a horrible, shapeless pulp.

The miners listened to this ghastly tale in silence. Slow as most of them were to accept the forms or dogmas of religion, it seemed to them that God—for at bottom all men who wrestle with nature in abnormal conditions believe in God—could not allow such atrocities to pass unpunished, unavenged. There was no swearing, and but little talking; the minutes were passing, and the hour of action was about to strike.

When the word came that the Indians were advancing, the crest of the Higuerita was deserted, and every man at his post. In the upper tower, where Jack Corbis knelt behind his gun, Mr. Tracy, Holt, and Krisch stood together at the narrow port-holes covered with painted wire-cloth, through which they watched the enemy, who was beginning to show himself cautiously. Nothing moved on the apparently abandoned plateau of the mine, but the iron turrets noiselessly and imperceptibly turned on their axes so as to cover the

heaviest body of the Indians, now emerging from the thickets on all sides of the hill, which they had surrounded. At first they seemed suspicious at this absolute desertion, and waited for their chiefs, who ordered a volley to be fired tentatively at the turrets.

Zip—zip-zwang-t'n! Krisch turned to follow the sound round the iron box in which they were, and asked in a whisper:

"You, Dscheck, what was then that?" Then espying the ragged chunk of lead on the floor, he picked it up, and holding it with unfeigned wonder between his fingers, he added solemnly, in English, for he attempted English when he was excited, "It was an ball!"

A smile went round at this simple-minded remark, but quickly vanished as Mr. Tracy, with one hand on the signal click and the other on the flag-rope, called out: "Silence and attention now, Jack. They are coming. Are you ready?"

"Ay, ay, sir—ready!" the man answered.

No shot had been fired in answer to their volley, and the Indians were approaching boldly. There was something awful in the unsuspecting advance of all this "cannon meat"—something that, in spite of its horror, reassured the superstitious, who saw in it the hand of Providence leading the criminals up to their punishment.

"Now, Jack, ready—fire!"

Twice the turret revolved completely, and Jack turned his crank viciously. They could hear or see nothing, for the iron box was surrounded by a cloud of smoke, and the rattling of the gun completely drowned all other sounds. But the moment that preceded that

in which they regained their hearing was a painful one; the next still more so. For before the intoxication of powder and blood has frenzied the mind, even the most hardened are appalled at the silence of their victim, at the sudden cessation of that life which they have extinguished. The species of remorse which men acting together are apt to feel collectively becomes personal at the victim's cry of reproach, which each actor in the drama immediately feels is meant for him alone. Where a dozen soldiers have shot a man it is safe to say that each one would indignantly repudiate the deed; yet if the shots had failed to take fatal effect, every man of those twelve would involuntarily accuse himself of cruelty, as if he alone were responsible, just as in his worse moments he would boast of having killed a man.

The smoke lifted at last, and disclosed the vast number of dead and dying that lay on the ground around them; and as the piteous cries of the wounded and the frightened howls of the fugitives reached their ears, the men felt awed by the magnitude of the deed they had done. A long silence followed, and when Corbis, with an effort of jocularity, cried out, "Ky-ee-eye! Billy Long, the corpse-furnisher down to Portsmouth, 'd 'a given me a hundred dollars for that job," although no one smiled, all felt relieved. A moment later a rifle cracked in one of the embrasures, and an Indian, who was but slightly wounded, and had risen to run, dropped dead. Mechanically at first a few of the men followed this example, picking off every Yaqui who moved, and little by little the natural blood-thirstiness of the man-animal asserted itself: even the dead bodies

were killed over again. "The —— black devils might be shammin', after all!"

Later the bodies were picked up, and, with a few barrels of lime, cast all together into an old shaft near the Cohuache outcrop; the remaining space was then filled in with rock from the dump, and a cross bearing the following tar-painted inscription placed above it:

HEAR LAYS
THE BODIS
OF 463
INDJEEANS, JAKKIS AND MYOES
KILT HEAR JULIE 12, 18—. .

When the ground had been cleared, the men separated, and Holt went down with Krisch to the lower turret, where they spent the night. The next morning they were awakened early by an explosion that shook the whole hill, and as they rushed to the window they saw, above the dense crown of smoke that hid from view the old shaft and the upper turret, strange things that looked like fragments of human bodies, amidst twisted machinery and shattered rocks. Two of the miners were running at full speed down the path towards them, and from these they learned the details of the disaster.

After the butchery of the preceding day the scout Policarpio had remembered that he was a Yaqui, and after sending word to the Indian camp, he had murdered Jack Corbis as he lay asleep beside his gun. He was present when the gun was mounted, and had learned to take it to pieces; in the morning some of the most important parts were found missing. Mr. Tracy had awakened just in time to save Rapsey, over

whom the Indian was bending with a machete in his hand. After giving the alarm, and on discovering that all the wires had been cut, he summoned the men and sent them at once down the old shaft to try and bring up the third gun, which was standing ready mounted in the *patio* of the hacienda. These two miners had remained with him, and they were all three at work taking the useless gun down when the Indians began to show themselves in the cactus-bush around the old powder-house. Without manifesting any signs of alarm, Mr. Tracy had told them that he was going down the shaft to set off the dynamite stored there as soon as a large number of Indians had collected and begun to descend. They were to wait, and, during the temporary demoralization of the Indians by the explosion, to break through and tell Holt to hold out until he could rescue him. A large number of Indians must have been killed, for the whole top of the mountain seemed to have caved in.

This information fell upon Holt like the blow of a sledge. That Tracy was dead there could be not the slightest doubt, and the chances of being liberated were not worth considering. The men at the mill, hearing the explosion and receiving no news from the mine, would naturally conclude that all had perished. There was now no communication between the two through the underground workings; and as the surface was in the hands of the Indians, it would be impossible for them to cut their way through. He determined, however, to bear the burden of this knowledge alone. It would only dishearten the men to reveal the truth; and even now some unlooked-for accident might happen in

time to save them. He counted them over, and found that altogether, besides himself and Krisch, they were but five and the girl Masima. This was sufficient for a night and a day shift, and with the provisions and ammunition on hand they might hold out some time. Before this he had felt somewhat uncertain as to his behavior in action; but now, as he reflected that New England blood was at its best when all seemed lost, it gratified him to remember that he was born in Salem, of good old stock that had done its duty in '76, in 1812, and later when the stripes of the glorious young flag that flapped on the pole above him were to have been barred. Pluck thus became a duty, and in the fulfilment of a duty his New England conscience, that most ineradicable of Yankee traits, would be sure to stand him in good stead. Yet, notwithstanding these comforting reassurances, he could not forget that the balance of chances was unequivocally against him, and that the application to his case of any equation of probabilities which he could remember would have fixed his annual premium at about ten times the insurance.

While he was making an inventory of the stock on hand—provisions and ammunition—it occurred to him that as the quantities were very small, the bulk of these must have been stored on the upper level. Whatever had been left by the explosion would naturally fall into the hands of the Indians if not secured at once. He called the men together, explained the situation, and proposed that they draw lots among themselves to determine who should accompany him. Krisch refused to be left behind, so after shaking hands all round rather solemnly—for since the events of the preceding

day the men manifested a growing tendency to consider present actions as possibly final—the four started cautiously on their journey, and at the end of an hour of slow crawling on hands and knees reached one of the abandoned adobe huts from which they could see the shaft's mouth.

Of the most prosperous part of the camp nothing remained but a shattered and picturesque ruin. With a certain natural sense of fitness, the fragments of the monument which Tracy had erected had fallen back together over his grave into a pyramid of sufficient magnitude to disdain any explanatory inscription, and near this pile stood a group of some fifty Indians, gazing awe-stricken and silent at this terrible evidence of the white man's power, greater even to destroy than to build. The presence of such a large body of the foe of course put a stop to any further operations of the foraging party, and they turned to go back to the Libertad. Suddenly a shot fell, and Dalmasio, an Italian, who was walking next to Holt, stumbled and dropped. They were not more than two hundred yards from the fort, and their first unconscious impulse was to dash forward, out of reach of the bullets that had begun to whistle and patter around them. Their first conscious impulse sent them back to their fallen comrade, whom Krisch threw over his shoulders, while the other two attacked the pursuers.

After the first blows all hesitation, all scruples, vanished, and an intense thirst for blood, a savage desire to slash and kill that amounted nearly to a frenzy, seized upon these two men, who threw themselves recklessly on the black flesh before them. The wounds in-

flicted by their weapons were not sufficiently deep, above all, not sufficiently bloody; the flash of the powder must singe the skin of their adversaries or the shot did not satisfy them; and at last Oldham, who in other circumstances had always been thought a mild, harmless Pennsylvanian, moved by a sudden fury to bite or scratch, cast his arms away, and rushed on the naked savages like a mad dog. Little by little he was drawn away from Holt; a heavy blow from one of the machetes struck him on the head, nearly stunning him, and still fighting he fell on his knees. For a few moments his superior strength kept the Indians off; the sleeves of his shirt were nearly hacked away, and beneath the reddening, clinging cloth little streams of blood ran down his arms and between his fingers; his hands began to slip off the smooth skin of the Mayos, his blows grew weaker and more wild, and at last with a little sigh he sank back. Then one of the Indians seized him by the hair and pulled at it with all his strength, while another hacked at his throat, striking him now on the chin, now on the shoulder, in his blind fury; and a third, leaning with all his weight on the machete, drove the dull blade through his ribs, and twisted it with a horrible gurgling, crunching noise.

"Come back, Jack; for God's sake come back, man! They are all advancing, and we've got them covered."

How he got back, Holt never remembered. Whichever way he turned he could see nothing but the bleeding body of his comrade and the faces of his slayers gleaming with fiendish ferocity. The idea of revenge was the only one of which he was conscious; his sole preoccupation was to kill, and, thrusting Clarke aside,

he pointed the gun and worked it himself for a few moments, scarcely realizing what he was doing. Yet so great is the force of habit that to his companions he appeared as self-possessed as usual. They were amazed at his coolness, tacitly recognized that he was really their captain, and spoke to him with a certain involuntary deference. When the gun ceased to be effective, Holt had it drawn back, and stood before the port-hole picking off any Indians within range, and exposing himself recklessly to their fire. Several bullets entered the opening, but without touching him, as if the leaden messengers themselves recognized in bravery an armor more impenetrable than iron or stone.

By degrees, however, the fever left him, and a great lassitude, both physical and mental, overcame him. He turned from the window and looked into the room; crouched on the floor at his feet, Masima was holding the rifle she had just loaded; though he had not noticed her before, she had sat there hour after hour patiently wiping and reloading the arms which the men handed down to her. Without speaking she looked up into her master's face, and it had a gratefully soothing effect upon him; it was the first kind look he had seen that day, and it took him far away from the bloody scenes outside. At that moment it seemed strange that any one should care for him, and he was deeply moved at the thought, which then for the first time suggested itself, that she alone of all the women had remained behind.

"*Pobrecita!*" he said, laying his hand gently on her head, "you are alone? Where is the grandmother?"

"*Quien sabe*, Don Juan? She went away with all the women some days ago. I would not go."

"And why not?" he asked. The next moment he wished he could recall the question; and when the girl answered, softly, half-caressingly, "Do I not belong to you, Don Juanito?" he felt profoundly ashamed of his words. Was it not sufficient that she had remained to share his fate? What need had he to make her say that of which she was as yet unconscious, but which her own spoken words would teach her? At her age she would go to sleep a child and awake a woman. Heigh-ho! This was the worst thing he had done that day; and he rose wearily to go into the room below, where they all slept. Dalmasio and Corning were dead, and the two corpses, half covered with a blanket, lay rigid and uncouth-looking on the brick floor.

"Mr. Holt, please, sir," said Clarke, coming in from the kitchen, as he stood staring blankly at those who but a little while ago were standing by his side— "please, sir, old Evans be pretty bad, Mr. Holt. I be thinkin' he want to see you, sir."

Holt sat down on the bed by the wounded old timber-man, and waited for him to speak.

"Mr. Holt," he said, presently, "be that you?"

"Yes, Ned, old man. Are you badly hurt?"

"I be, Mr. Holt—I be," the man answered, with an effort. "Through the left breast—I was standin' behind ye." Then, after a pause, "Ye'll be writin' to Corn'all soon, Mr. Holt, will ye? There be two quarters' back pay—Mrs. Edward Ivons—at the Miners' Bank— Be you still there, Mr. Holt?" he added, anxiously, and staring Jack in the face. "I thought you was gone. It's nigh on sundown, and a trifle dark without my glasses. Mr. Holt, how many be left of we?"

"Four, Ned, counting you. We are melting like wax."

The old man's eyes lighted up for a moment, and he gasped with a horrible attempt to smile, "But it be beeswax, Mr. Holt; it sticks." He tried to laugh, but was seized with a violent fit of coughing that brought the blood to his mouth. Mechanically he wiped his lips with the back of his sleeve, and twitched at the cloth of his overalls. "Mrs. Ivons," he muttered again, indistinctly. "Truro, down into Corn'all. Holt 'll do it—Holt—Jack Holt—he be awnest, Holt be. Two back quarters. Two year more work here. Go by San Francisco this time. The second set in the west drift be a 'arf-inch too high. Ah! be ye talkin' to me?" He breathed stertorously two or three times and half raised his arms weakly. His head dropped with a slight gurgle, and the old man went home to "Corn'all."

During the night they buried them by the dim light of the stars, and the three survivors returned to the fort, which to them had become all the world.

And the dull routine of their prison life began. Day passed after day, and yet no news of the outside world reached them in their silent solitude. The sun shone hotly on the white rocks, the rain came down in torrents, the moon rose and set, and still no tidings came to them. The giant Frailes looked down from their majestic height, calm, beautiful, impassive, but told them nothing. Little plants grew into tall trees, and the hills with tropical haste drew on their velvety mantle of verdure. The days grew to weeks, and still nothing moved in the deserted Higuerita range. Yet

little by little they became accustomed to their loneliness, and the danger by which they were surrounded lost some of its reality. An occasional shot warned them of the presence of the Indians in the dense thickets which covered the once bare dumps, and they did not dare to go many steps away from the protecting fort. But one morning Clarke discovered a brace of guinea-hens gravely crossing the path that led to the opposite hill, and, as their provisions were becoming rapidly exhausted, he could not resist the temptation to shoot and run out to secure his booty. As he bent over, a second shot sounded in the brush, and he staggered forward with a cry. Holt and Krisch, both unarmed at the moment, ran out unhesitatingly to pick up their comrade, who had now become even more than a friend to them, and as they lifted the inanimate body and recognized that life had fled, something gave way in their hearts; for the first time since their trials began they felt all hope forsake them, and their eyes filled with tears. Suddenly they heard footsteps behind them, and saw two Yaquis brandishing their machetes and coming towards them. They were unarmed, yet, with that dead body between them, neither for a moment thought of flight. A few days more or less—what did it matter? Instinctively each stopped, picked up a stone, and waited. The Indians were only a few yards away; ten seconds more and it would probably be all over. At that moment a wild shriek from the fort caused them to turn; a flash and a little puff of smoke burst from the port-hole, and the foremost Yaqui, shot through the head, stumbled and fell forward against Holt, while the other turned and ran.

The men looked at each other and smiled. All was not over yet, then? and with something like a feeling of gladness they returned to the house.

Masima was still watching from the window with the same expression of concentrated ferocity on her little face that had so much astonished Holt a few weeks before. As he entered she put down the rifle, lifted her *rebozo*, and, with her head thrown back, gazed at him silently with her half-closed eyes. The bud had burst; the child was a child no longer; suddenly the knowledge had come. She trembled slightly, lowered her eyes, and, bursting into tears, ran from the room.

The men, too, had understood. Krisch shrugged his shoulders, smiled, and muttered to himself, "It had must be so;" but Holt was silent. If it had been any other girl, he too would have shrugged his shoulders, smiled perhaps a little more cynically than his friend, and accepted the flower which Nature offered him so frankly. But apart from his personal feelings in this matter, the time and place seemed strangely chosen for trifling. What wild freak was this of Master Cupid to pass through the Indian lines and play his pranks in this house that was so fast becoming a mausoleum?

For the next few days Masima shunned him, and yet with what infinite tenderness she bound his wounds and dressed them! They were mere scratches, and yet had one awkward movement of hers meant death to him, she could not have been more careful or her touch more delicate. When she pronounced his name, which she now did but rarely, her voice softened, and the "Don Juanito" sounded like a caress. Krisch had more than once detected her gazing for long minutes

at her master as no woman had ever looked at him; but when they met his, those soft eyes became so hard and cruel that he was startled, and perhaps a little frightened.

Meanwhile the days passed, the provisions disappeared, and still their solitude was unbroken. Above them in the silent blue vault the ragged-winged *chupilotes* sailed smoothly without apparent effort, and cast long, sweeping shadow curves over the white plateau, or, motionless, hung like black dots in the hot, quivering air. On the opposite hills the red deer bounded along gracefully far beyond rifle range, and up on the precipitous peaks of the Frailes the wild goats scampered merrily. Velvety tarantulas picked their way cautiously over the stones, and the little bobtailed birds shot in at the windows and dashed at the slumbering *alacranes* that basked in the sunlight. Lizards ran in and out with their gracefully curving tails curled up above them, or stopped in the checkered square of light and shadow which the window-grating drew on the floor, and looked, silent themselves, at the three silent figures in the room; for the silence that surrounded them had invaded the house and crept into their hearts.

By degrees, yet rapidly, the end was approaching; the last meal had been shared. Both Holt and Krisch were seated in the doorway, careless of the danger to which they were thus exposed, and indeed secretly hoping that some well-aimed bullet might put an end to their misery. Masima was kneeling near them, scraping away from the stone the last crumbs of dough that still adhered to the *metate*, when a shadow

fell across the threshold. A cry, something like a scuffle, and a dull blow—and Masima fell into Holt's arms with her own around his neck, and he held her there fainting. From the soft warm breast that lay against his own the red blood trickled slowly through his open shirt and dropped on to the floor, and the passive little head rolled over on his shoulder. Once she opened her eyes and looked into his with infinite love, until little by little the light died out of them; her lips parted, but she did not speak, and in a last spasm of pain she turned abruptly, thrust her hands upward into his hair, and slowly drew his head down towards her.

The next day, when they had laid her to rest on the hill-side, Holt took Krisch by the hand and told him what he had known from the beginning—that there never had been any hope. "Julius, old man, forgive me for not telling you then," he said, "but I thought I was doing what was best. Will you forgive me now?"

Before the approach of death, men, especially starving men, are apt to be sentimental; their nervous strength is exhausted, and the world, seated securely before its desk at home, should not criticise their words and feelings according to its every-day indifferent standard. So it need not be thought strange that at this moment both these boys had tears in their eyes, or that Krisch embraced his friend and kissed him.

"Dscheck, dear friend," he said, presently, "I too knew it from the first."

The day passed slowly, hour by hour, in the usual

solemn sunlit silence. Towards dusk Holt went to his bed and lay down. The buzzing in his ears and a strange inability to finish any thought warned him that he was weakening fast. A sensation of physical numbness gradually overcame him, and he wondered at times whether he were asleep or awake. When Krisch bade him good-night the words did not convey any intelligent meaning to his mind until several minutes later, and then it seemed to him that some one else — some one whom he had not seen for a long time — had spoken them. Mingled with visions of home, recollections of travel and of trivial conversations with chance acquaintances crowded upon him, strangely distinct for a moment, and then, without apparent transition, merging into others totally unconnected with them. It was pitchy dark in the room, yet it suddenly seemed to him to be flooded with sunshine—as on the last day he had passed at home. He saw the large, white square house, with its green blinds, its large veranda and shingle roof; in front, the row of magnificent plumed elms cast the lace-work of their shadow on the sunlit road, and in the soft green field beyond, dotted with yellow buttercups, the old sorrel mare on which he had learned to ride was nibbling the tender grass. The butler, old man Kelly, who had played with him when he was a child, showed his full white waistcoat at the dining-room window, and called to Master John that dinner was waiting. The nurse Maggie— It had become dark again, and all were seated together in the little room—grandmother's room, where she had spent the evenings of forty years with the stern-looking old

gentleman whose portrait hung over the mantelpiece. From the walls the same large-boned ladies in low-necked dresses, and stout gentlemen in snuff-colored smallclothes, looked down through the narrow red-gold frames just as they did when he was a child in petticoats and curls. The same old china vases, the same curios— Why, who had put the lights out?—What was that pat-pat outside?—only Masima making tortillas. Masima!—she did not hear him. How sleepy he was! Suddenly he was at home again, standing with his back to the white mantelpiece, with its carved medallions and looped garlands of laurel; he was telling them how they had held the mine and driven off the Indians. How strange it seemed! How had he returned home? He could not remember then, but to-morrow it would come back to him, no doubt. How drowsy he was! Who was that speaking to him? Masima again! Poor little thing, what was to become of her now—*now?*—why had he said *now?*—she had saved his life once, long ago—when was it?—he could not remember that either, but Krisch knew all about it; he saw the Indian strike—and that was blood on his shirt—warm still—blood. What did she want with him? Yes, yes; he was coming presently. Then he lay back and slept.

At dawn Krisch awoke and turned over. "*Du*, Dscheck!" He waited a moment, and called again: "You, Dscheck! You are asleep? Dscheck! Poor fellow! he is weary; he sleeps." With an effort he drew the blanket over his head and turned his face to the wall—and all was quiet up at the Higuerita.

Meanwhile a great battle was being fought in the

plain of Minas Nuevas, and the Indians were slowly retreating. Moroyoqui, the Mayo chief, was dead, and before noon Cajeme with his Yaquis began his march back to the river, unmolested by the Mexican generals, who rightly deemed it a more dangerous undertaking to pursue an Indian force than to fight it. When the issue of the battle was no longer doubtful, Salcevedo, at the head of a hundred and fifty rancheros, took the road to Aduana. He had little hope of finding any of his friends alive, for the surrounding country had for some weeks been in the hands of the enemy, and the columns of smoke which could be seen from headquarters in town rising above the ruins of ranchos and villages proved how ruthlessly the work of devastation was being pursued. He was therefore greatly surprised on reaching the bend of the *arroyo* to see the American and Mexican flags still floating above the mill buildings. Lowe rode out to meet him, and in a few words made his report.

"We must go to the mine at once," the Mexican answered, and, calling to his brother-in-law, the doctor, to follow with twenty men, he put his mule to a gallop.

As they neared the foot of the dump they stopped a moment and listened eagerly for any sound from above. Lowe shouted the names of his friends, but only the echo of his own voice answered, and with a shake of his head he began the ascent slowly, for now he was in no hurry to learn what he feared was the truth. A few yards further on, where the path turned, he caught sight of the flag hanging limp and motionless from the pole over the office.

"By ——, they've held it!" he cried, slapping his thigh and driving the spurs into his mule. "Come along, boys. Hullo, Krisch! Holt! Jack! we are coming! Get up there, you brute! *Anda! anda!*"

The others galloped behind him, shouting excitedly. Before the open door of the office they pulled up. No one had come out, no one had answered, and for a minute the men hesitated before dismounting.

"Doctor," Lowe said, in a low voice, and without looking up, "you go in first."

Ortiz got off his mule, removed his spurs leisurely, and threw them down on the brick veranda. Then he took off his hat and went in, while the indifferent *mozos* formed a semicircle around the other two and waited. Presently Ortiz returned, and stood in the doorway rolling a cigarette.

"There are two," he said, simply. "They will live."

SANCHO MITARRA

SANCHO MITARRA

SOME years ago I passed my summer vacation in the north of Spain, studying the battle-grounds of the last Carlist war. Sketching and collecting notes, I loitered about the picturesque towns which, by the loss of their ancient charters, had paid so high a price for their loyalty to Don Carlos, until eventually I reached Irún, where I remained a week. During the daytime the large, low-studded eating-room of the inn was entirely deserted, but towards evening quite a number of men were in the habit of dropping in, singly or in groups, and a few minutes later the noise became deafening. Among these guests I noticed especially a fine-looking, rather silent person, who, to judge from the deference with which the others treated him, must have been a local celebrity. His face was apparently cut in two by an irregular scar, rather frightful to look at until he smiled, when the ugly purplish lines seemed to disappear in the wrinkles about his mouth. I was anxious to get a good sketch of him, but succeeded only after many unsatisfactory attempts, and I was about to close my book when a young man, who had been looking over my shoulder, exclaimed:

"Ah, señor, what would I not give for that portrait!"

"*Caballero*," I answered, "it is yours; and I esteem the compliment of your request so far above the value of the drawing that you must allow me to consider myself your debtor." My real pay lay in the pleasure this answer gave me, and I felt kindly towards the man who had afforded me an opportunity of making such orthodox use of my Spanish.

So we fell into conversation, and before leaving he handed me his card, on which I read the name Simón Muñoz, and below, in brackets, the word *poeta*. He was assistant editor of the local paper, knew everybody, and seemed astonished when, having told me the name of the man with the scar, I asked further about him. "Is it possible," he said, "that you have not heard of Sancho Mitarra? In that case, sir, you must allow me to offer you a little sketch which I have written about him, in exchange for the portrait which you so generously gave me."

The next morning the manuscript was brought up to my room with my chocolate, and as a heavy rain confined me to the house, I translated it into English. It was as follows:

I

Over a thousand years ago, or, to be more pedantic, A.D. 872, the Gascons, being unable to obtain a consul from France, and unwilling to elect one at home, sent over into Castile for Sancho García, called Sancho Mitarra, or the Terrible. As King of Pampelona and Navarre he ruled over them for nearly forty years, gaining great renown not only as a brave Christian

soldier in his wars against the Moors, but as a wise and strong-handed ruler at home. From this good king Sancho Mitarra, the brass-founder of Irún, is directly descended, as it were easy to prove by the old chronicles of Navarre; but as he is a republican on principle, it gives him less pleasure to reflect upon the distinction of his ancestors than upon the sturdiness of a family that has endured a thousand years without a break.

Indeed, as for his being descended from a king, it seems difficult to understand how it could be otherwise. For, supposing that Sancho had been the only one in Spain thirty generations ago, and each of his descendants had produced but two children, a simple calculation shows that there should be one thousand and seventy-three odd million of these descendants in the world to-day. Now, as the population of Spain is less than twenty millions, every inhabitant must have some fifty-three or more claims to royal ancestry—a fact which might in some cases account for the list of titles borne by our more modest grandees of the first class.

It is equally indisputable that no fortune, however great, could bear subdivision on such a magnificent scale; hence the poverty, shared by Sancho's father with so many other distant members of the royal family, seems reasonable enough. This worthy citizen was by trade a fisherman, part owner and captain of the *Guerendiain*, a stanch but ugly vessel belonging to the Basque cod fleet. His house was in the oldest quarter of the town, behind the church; and in the dirty kitchen, redolent of the mingled perfumes

of tar, garlic, and tobacco-smoke, old Mitarra told strangely incredible tales of the "Américas" beyond the sea. The priest, the postmaster, the captain of the customs, and a couple of retired smugglers were wont to meet there at all hours of the day when the old man was at home, but usually only after the evening *puchero*,* when the family was alone.

Among these good people Sancho grew up, though it can hardly be said that he developed, until, about the time he was twelve years old, the quiet town was thrown into a state of consternation by the news that the whole fleet had been lost off the Banks. The sailor had left but little money—indeed, barely enough to support his widow; and thus Sancho had to give up tossing knives and playing ball for the less gentlemanly but more practical employment of blowing the bellows in his uncle's smithy, which enabled him to contribute towards the family expenses. If it be argued that his appetite was altogether out of proportion to his contributions, it were but right to give him credit for a cheerful disposition, a coaxing laugh which compelled sympathy, and a merry wit, always at the service of the household. And whoever has lived on meagre fare and in the shadow of sorrow will testify that a merry company around the pot makes as good a sauce as hunger.

Matters went on smoothly for a few years following the old fisherman's disappearance, and indeed up to the date of Sancho's sixteenth birthday, when, coming of age suddenly, as it is the custom for kings and

* Species of boiled meat with vegetables.

possibly for their descendants to do, the ambition of conquest began to disturb his dreams. He renounced the hammer and anvil as being inconsistent with the pursuit of glory, and, having successively exacted tribute from the sea in the shape of fish, and from the mountains in the shape of game, he finally joined the brotherhood of the *contrabandistas*, among whom he made not a little money. During the periodical intervals of rest that followed each expedition he fell in love with a beautiful, poor, but haughty girl, Elvira Almalta of Ragosa, whom he besought to become his wife. But, dazzled by the brilliant life of the great bull-fighters whom she had often admired, the girl had long before vowed to marry no man who had not acquired renown in the arena—the renown most dear to Spanish hearts—and Sancho then and there resolved that Spain should ring again with the glory of Mitarra. He had succeeded with so little effort in everything that he had hitherto undertaken that the new problem before him neither awed nor troubled him; and, with his characteristic impetuosity, he prepared to leave on the morrow for Pampeluna, where the great Lagartijo was at home. The postmaster gave him some sound advice; the priest his blessing and an antique drawing, representing bull-fighters attending mass before the *corrida;* while Elvira gave him her promise (conditionally) and a kiss. With these presents, and an immense fund of confidence in his own resources, Sancho started on his apprenticeship.

For more than a year nothing was heard from the young man directly. Under an assumed name he

appeared in several minor bull-fights in remote provincial towns, and there he probably acquitted himself so well as to compel the notice of the great Frascuelo; for when the now famous *corrida* of the 9th of August was advertised throughout the country, Elvira's *toreador*-errant was announced on the play-bills under his own name of Sancho Mitarra.

II

It is a gala day. A great lady, the greatest in the land, has brought her infant son to witness his first bull-fight and learn early in life to accept the tribute of blood shed in his honor. Cloth of gold and crimson velvet hang in heavy folds from the front of the governor's gallery, and glorious silken banners, embroidered with the royal arms, flap lazily on each side of the wooden box which a poet-laureate might mistake for a throne. Gorgeous uniforms, mingled with dazzling costumes, make a background fit for a king's portrait; and to right and left, as far as the shade tempers the heat of the summer afternoon, the magnificent fancy of old Spain shines forth once again after years of courteous oblivion. The stage setting seems perfect. The play that is to be enacted belongs to the repertory of a forgotten, so-called barbarous, age, and the audience has arrayed itself accordingly; perhaps as an apology for its presence, perhaps to bear out the illusion of a revival, perhaps merely because its gold and crimson harmonizes with the gold of the sunlight on

the yellow sand, and the crimson of the blood that is to flow.

Facing the picturesque wisdom of the realm, that shines in dignified magnificence on the shady side of the circus, the picaresque and ragged populace, brilliant only by its apt wit, undulates impatiently beneath the glaring sun—Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, types of a past age, if you will, but also types of modern Spain, no more obsolete than the bloody game which both await.

In the dazzling arena below, a fife-and-drum band walks solemnly round and round, heedless of well-aimed oranges or equally well-pointed gibes. In the droning buzz of ten thousand talking people, the rumble of the drums is completely lost, and the thin, clear, querulous notes of the pipers sound ridiculously weak and unsuited to the occasion—a discord which establishes the reality of the scene, destroying the illusion of a perfect stage performance, but investing it with the keen interest of an event in real life. All along the corridor that surrounds the arena, separating the *valla* from the wall above which the public is seated, the privileged amateurs are eagerly discussing the chances of the fight, prophesying the behavior of each bull, and betting on the number of passes before the final stroke. The cornet of the band blows a preliminary blast and the music bursts forth; the ring is hurriedly cleared, and in two lines the *cuadrilla* makes its entrance, to right and left. For a brief moment the chattering of the audience ceases, and in the partial silence each *toreador*, preceded by his shadow, gravely struts across the sand to his appointed place. An *alguazíl*, dressed in

black velvet, gallops in at the head of a short, mounted procession and urges his chestnut horse to rear, while the crowd jeers at him for his theatrical prowess. The key of the *toríl* gleams for a moment in the air and disappears in the horseman's pointed felt hat. A clatter and a scurry—a few taunting cries—a clashing of the closing gates—and the formalities of the overture are over.

Before a battle, before a duel, or before a bull-fight there is always one moment of silent *recueillement*, during which the contestants, veterans or raw recruits, instinctively weigh the chances. God only knows the issue, and during this last respite man realizes the possibility of the immediate future. Even the *espada* Frascuelo, Lagartijo, or Mazzantini acknowledges to himself that there is a certain solemnity in this gambling with death. Before the public he drapes his gorgeous *capa* about him in pretty falling folds; secretly he crosses himself; and the public, whose wonderful intuition justifies the saying *Vox populi, vox Dei*, appreciates the hidden anxiety without heeding the ostentatious affected indifference.

Vaya! The gate is open, the suspense is over. The angry animal dashes in furiously—smooth-limbed, deep-chested, superbly strong and defiant—and the multitude heave a sigh of relief. The duel is begun. Fifteen weak, intelligent, skilful animals, dressed in gold and silver and silk, against a single one in sombre satin —a large, lithe-flanked monster, ignorant of its might, and confident in its ignorance.

Among the *chulos* facing the bull, Sancho stands in green and gold. It is his first appearance before a

picked audience, and he feels nervous, yet confident of distinguishing himself if only the opportunity offers. In the farthest box on the shady side he recognizes his mother and Elvira in the front row; behind them the postmaster, the collector of customs, and, unless he is much mistaken, his old friend the priest, nodding at him from behind Elvira's fan. But he has no leisure now to look up at them, for the bull is near him. He throws out his mantle, the animal charges, misses, and passes on, while the handsome boy, avoiding the thrust of the long, polished horns, stands draped in the gaudy silk He has barely moved, and the crowd cries, "Well done!" but forgets him again as the bull charges the nearest *picador*, raising steed and rider from the ground.

As the play proceeds the excitement grows, and the bull-fighters, spurred on by the despotic fancy of the public, vie with one another in daring and skill. Poor Sancho, alas! is doomed to disappointment. He handles his *capa* perfectly; plants his *banderillas* gracefully, correctly, fearlessly, yet not more so than the others in the ring. With them he receives a passing tribute of applause; but as one bull after another is goaded into fury, and finally backed up against the fence to be killed, the great *espada* alone earns the wildly enthusiastic approbation of the audience. Sancho realizes that he is yet a novice, and that fame is not for the obscure. He feels that he could kill the bull as gracefully as the great man upon whom all honors and presents are showered; but he must bide his time, and rise upon the ladder of renown rung by rung. What he has done was well done, but it is nothing that will be remem-

bered. In the morrow's paper his name will appear only as one of the *cuadrilla;* the criticism of the connoisseurs will not condescend to notice him, and Elvira will still answer, "Not yet." Five bulls have been despatched, but one remains; and Opportunity, with her short front hair, has placed only the bald part of her cranium within his reach. Like all men of a sanguine temper, he is easily depressed; and as the doors of the *toríl* open for the entrance of the sixth bull, Sancho has well-nigh lost all hope and interest in the game.

The bull is small, dark-robed, well-armed, and bears the brand of Veragua. In a few bounds he reaches the centre of the arena, and pauses to look around. The glaring light after the darkness of his cage, the noisy clamoring of ten thousand excited spectators, and these two-legged moving things in gaudy colors, the like of which he has never seen before, arouse his curiosity and astonish him. By the nervous twitching of his tail and the quick, sharp movements of his head it is evident that he is no "coward." The *toreadores* instinctively recognize him for an exceedingly dangerous adversary, and so it is with more than ordinary prudence that they spread their *capas* before him and run away. But all this fails to move him: slowly and steadily he advances, looking at the man, not at the rag. Now it is Sancho's turn. The bull throws up his head, stops, then plunges forward with such lightning-like rapidity that the boy feels it is too late to run. The long, smooth horns are already on each side of him; and, scarcely realizing what he is doing, Sancho leaps forward upon the animal's back, and a second later to the ground. How they applaud! how they yell!

But he has no time to think, for the bull is coming at him again, heedless of the others who seek to intercept him; and now Sancho knows that the animal has singled him out, and that the fight is merely a duel between them. The case is rare, but he has heard of such; the danger is great, but he is not afraid; the chances of his escaping unscathed are few, but he feels confident and happy, for at last his opportunity has come. He flings away his useless *capa* and turns to run, not towards the refuge, the *burladero*, but straight towards the centre of the arena, while the older men shake their heads: a clever bull and a rash youth, there is but one ending to that tale, and a sad one at best. The spectators are beginning to understand, and hold their breath. During the race across the sand not a sound is heard in the vast amphitheatre, but the men lean forward and the women hold their fans up to their faces ready to shut out the sight. Suddenly, in the very centre of the arena, Sancho turns, stands, and stretches out one hand with a commanding gesture, and the bull, hesitant and startled, stops dead in his wild rush onward, and, stemmed on his outstretched forelegs, gazes in amazement at the slim figure that defies him. Ha! what a glorious group! Strength, grace, beauty, courage, and such movement, suddenly fixed as though in bronze! And now it is gone, as the first low growl of admiration bursts into a thunder of the wildest, most frantic applause. The ten thousand spectators rise as one man to their feet; the "sun" and the "shade" are equally carried away by emotion, and the most dignified grandees re-echo the very cries of the masses. Even the *cuadrilla* forgets itself, and the

bull, bewildered by the extraordinary clamor, wheels about and dashes at the nearest picador, hurling man and horse against the *tablas* in his mad onslaught. He has killed them both! But what is that to him or to the crowd? As he turns he still sees before him the thing in green and gold, and the next moment the sharp-pronged *banderillas* are quivering in his flesh.

"*La silla! la silla!*" * yells the crowd. Its kindly sympathy for the skilful boy has made room for a less generous curiosity. Sancho has proved himself to be a master; now let him show what he can do. If he has in him the elements of a great bull-fighter, let him be tested. It is cruel to demand "*la silla*" with such a bull; but Sancho now belongs to the public, and an excited, blood-thirsty crowd knows neither sympathy nor sentimentality. If he succeeds, the greater be his honor; if he fails—well, then, he should not have led them to suppose him greater than he was. In this moment of over-excitement the injustice, the cruel selfishness of the argument, are lost even on Sancho, intoxicated with applause and suddenly earned success; even on his mother, too Spanish to think of danger when her son is offered an opportunity for distinction; and even on Elvira, whose lover is now surpassing the ideal *torero* of her dreams.

Again, as Sancho takes his seat facing the bull, a solemn hush prevails, and the silence seems to be more

* The *torero* sits in a chair (*silla*) and awaits the bull's charge; he holds the *banderillas* (sharp-pronged darts with points) before him, and, in a sitting posture, plants them in the bull's shoulder—a most dangerous feat. Nearly all who attempt it rise before the bull is near them.

impressive for the clamor that preceded. The older bull-fighters, with their *capas* unfolded, stand ready for an emergency. He raises his arms and poises the sharp-pronged darts; a dash, a plunge, a few half-smothered cries, and the chair flies upward through the air to alight forty feet away, while Sancho seems to be standing on the very spot he occupied before the charge. The green and gold ribbons dangling from the bull's neck alone show how sure was the boy's aim and how steady his hand. A murmur of incredulity, more flattering than the deafening tumult that follows, sweeps over the benches, and hats, fans, jewels, and cigars rain down into the ring. All restraint seems loosened; all timidity gone from the most timid; young girls, with flushed faces and flashing eyes, laugh hysterically and call out the hero's name. Even the haughty Elvira rises, unclasps her bracelet, and leaning forward with a cry that tells Sancho how real is his dream, she flings the token far out on the sand, where, heedless of all danger, the boy kneels and kisses the precious gift; for by this sign he knows that she has yielded.

Once more he miraculously avoids the bull, who charges at him from behind, and panting, exhausted, but inexpressibly happy, he leans against the *valla*, listening absent-mindedly to the compliments showered upon him. His part in the performance is over, for the cowed animal now sullenly faces his tormentors on the spot where he has chosen to die, and the *espada* is advancing, sword in hand, to give him the *coup de grâce*. But, to the surprise of all, he passes by the bull, and taking Sancho by the hand he offers

him the *muleta*. One bull more or less is of little importance to his glory, and should this boy become a great man he will remember his master's kindness gratefully; if, on the other hand, the future does not justify the day's promise, the bravos of the crowd that applaud his generosity are as pleasing to him now as had they been delayed a minute to applaud his skill.

And now the parts are reversed. The man attacks, the bull defends himself; he is weary with the gigantic efforts of the last half-hour, weary with loss of blood, weary of attacking an ever-vanishing foe. Sullenly, with lowered head and watchful eyes, he follows the undulating motion of the red rag before him, and listlessly attempts to reach it with his horns. A sharp prick on the nose once more rouses his rage; for the last time he charges; the long, flexible blade is buried in his flesh, and as his strength flows away with his life's blood the brave beast slowly kneels before his conqueror. The day is done, and Sancho turns to offer the bull to his lady, thus moving a step nearer to his fallen foe—dying, but, alas! not dead. In his impatient joy he has forgotten that that last moment before death is the most dangerous of the fight. Even as he raises his hand towards Elvira's box he is hurled to the ground, and as the two heroic animals sink quivering together on the sand, a mighty, passionate roar bursts from the fickle multitude: "*Toro, toro! Bravo, toro!*"

III

For many months Sancho was confined to his bed, unable to move; for, besides the great gash across his face, he had received two deep and dangerous wounds, and during this long time both Elvira and his friends were constantly at his bedside. It was then that he read "Don Quixote," a work which made such an impression upon his mind that to this day you will rarely meet him without a volume in his pocket, though he knows the greater part of it by heart. Nor is it doubtful that he then acquired the philosophy of contentment which is such a noticeable trait in his character, as well as his love for good Spanish literature, of which his knowledge is extraordinary in a man of his schooling.

When he had recovered sufficiently, he was married in the old church by the house, and the wedding was an occasion for great rejoicing in Irún. Many members of the *cuadrilla*, as one of which Sancho's name had become known throughout the length and breadth of Spain, were present at the banquet following the ceremony, and which was offered by the town. Old Salazar, as a representative of the profession, made an elaborate speech, in which he said that, having begun his career in so brilliant a fashion, it was Sancho Mitarra's duty to continue and become, as he naturally must, the greatest *torero* the world had ever seen.

Certainly no man, Pepe Hillo and El Tato included, had done more in a single day than had Sancho Mitarra, whom he was proud to call his friend, and whom as an older man he felt authorized to question about his future plans.

"Friends," answered the bridegroom, as he laid his hand on Elvira's head, "I went into the arena not to fight bulls, but to satisfy the lady of my heart; and now, 'as we have loaves, let us not go looking for cakes.' Glory is a fine thing, no doubt, but we cannot leave it to our children. Like truth, it lies at the bottom of a deep well; and, as the proverb says, 'The pitcher that goes often to the well is sure to lose either handle or spout,' a proof of which I shall carry on my face until the curate can do me more good than the baker. As for riches, 'four yards of Cuenca frieze are warmer than four of Segovia broadcloth;' and while counting the cobwebs on the ceiling I figured that I could earn the frieze more surely in a modest shop than the broadcloth in the amphitheatre. Thus, friends, let no man be disappointed in my resolution to become a brass-founder, for every one is as God has made him, and oftentimes a great deal worse."

Which accounts for Sancho's wearing a blouse instead of a gold-embroidered jacket.

THE STORY OF TRES PALACIOS

THE STORY OF TRES PALACIOS

BETWEEN Santiago de Veragua and the little port of Agua Dulce, that lies near the mouth of the Agua Dulce River, the ground falls in regular terraces, shelving towards the coast. During the dry season, when the ruts of the ox-carts and the rough, upchurned cattle trails have become filled in with plants, the road is easy, and a good horse will make the journey in eight hours—five in the morning and three towards sunset. The interval is dozed away in the shade of some clump of huge mangoes that rise from the swelling surface of the San Selina plain like giant fungi in a desolate graveyard. Two or three times a month during the local summer long wagon and pack trains, with all their attendant noise and bustle, wind slowly down to the coast; but, as a rule, the vast plain is silent and deserted.

One hot morning in April, a horseman dismounted by the shallow creek that drains the plateau, loosened the *cincha*, and removed the bit from the horse's mouth to let it drink. Then, leading the animal by the halter, he leisurely strolled towards the nearest clump of mangoes, where he began to unpack his load. This consisted of two fighting cocks, tied up in old straw hats, and slung one on either side of the saddle; a bunch of green bananas, several gourds and pans, a

cotton umbrella, a cavalry sword, and finally a very old, small, but apparently heavy leather valise—all of which he stowed away among the roots of the tree, and covered with his saddle gear.

The traveller was a tall, spare mulatto, quite seventy years old, yet still strong and quick of movement. Although dressed only in a white cotton shirt that hung loosely over his canvas drawers, there was a certain dignity about the man entirely out of keeping with the poverty of his appearance. On his left foot he wore an old Blücher shoe, armed with a silver spur, while the right was bare. An enormous ragged straw hat, battered entirely out of shape, was driven down to his eyes, though evidently not for the sake of concealment, for as soon as he had picketed his horse, he flung down his rags and walked down to the creek, where he bathed quickly but thoroughly, the while talking aloud to himself, now in a deep bass voice, now in a high quavering falsetto.

The place was evidently familiar to him, for he wasted no time in looking around. When he returned from the creek he cleaned up the little oven of stones built against the rock behind the mango, started a fire, then came back to liberate his fighting cocks, which he fed and fondled a little, speaking to them caressingly, and holding their heads under his ragged moustache. He seemed excited and happy, for he often interrupted his monologue to gesticulate or laugh. Once even he laid down his gourd full of *pinole*, uncovered the old valise, and weighed it carefully. The weight seemed to satify him, for with a sweeping gesture of his right arm he addressed the vast, silent wilderness around him,

"At last!" he cried. "I shall see her, my little darling, my little Teresita, jewel of my soul! I shall see her—I shall see her! Ah, Teresa, you said *five* thousand! I bring nearly *ten*. *Sí, señores*, nearly ten thousand dollars in gold! Have I grown old, perhaps? Have I grown weak, perhaps? Yes, no doubt I have grown both old and weak. But my arm is still strong enough to handle hammer and drill; my hand is still cunning to twirl the *batea*, and swash off the sand from the gold. Ah, Teresa, my little girl, I shall see you once more! And then—well, then there will be room enough for the old negro among these hills—room enough for the old man to go to rest. Who will be ashamed of his rags here? Who will laugh at his monkey face, with its scars and wrinkles? In the deserted rock gorges, when the time comes, there will be room for the old white horse and for the old negro. Yes, there will be room——"

He stopped suddenly, his arm in mid-air, his head raised. In his eyes there was a distant look, fixed upon things far beyond the horizon. The sullen silence of the hot noon surrounded him as with a wall of quivering heat, and gradually, as if overcome by an irresistible rising tide, the old man sank upon the ground, his head on his knees, and dim, fancy pictures in his greedy eyes. Above the steel-blue coating of the plain the distant purple hills rested heavily upon the horizon. The blotches of color made by the tree clumps grew fainter and fainter, until they seemed to swim like puffs of vapor in a sea of molten lead, and the sad noises of the tropical landscape hushed singly beneath the relentless sun. In comparison with the glare out-

side, the green shade of the majestic, motionless mango seemed damp and deep, like some diver's refuge beneath the sea surface—a region of slumber and quiet, full of the intense, overpowering stillness of the tropical noon. One by one the living things yielded, reluctant, yet powerless to resist, and one by one they lay down on the soft bed of dried leaves to sleep.

The old negro Tres Palacios alone remained awake. Yet he also was dreaming of the past—his own past—which was dream-land to him. His life had been so active, he had always lived so intensely in the present, that the leisure which is necessary to retrospection had been impossible; and now it seemed as though for the first time nature's ledger lay open before him, at the page of his account with her.

Dim and indistinct he saw high on a hill the veranda of a great white house with pillared front. Before the hall door stood a tall, handsome man in riding costume, talking angrily, his whip raised high in his uplifted hand. Below, kneeling on the steps, a negress was weeping and holding a child in her outstretched arms. Then the whip fell; the *vaquero* laughed; a purple welt sprang up across the woman's bare bosom; and Tres Palacios instinctively raised his hand to his face, and started to his feet. It was a dream, of course, a fancy, a reminiscence, perhaps; but who was there to tell? . . .

And then a bamboo hut, covered with the broad, fresh-smelling palm leaves weighted down with loam. Before the hut, a barren hill; and at the bottom a spring surrounded with half-dead mesquites and tall,

swaying palms. A round water-jug to be filled, and a boy struggling up the hill under the weight. A laugh, a taunt, a flash of steel, and the scoffer squirming on the ground, while the red pool about his shoulders grew larger and larger as he lay in the dust and became more quiet. . . . But it was all very dim, very indistinct. . . .

Then the broad savanna, with its web of creeks, its rugged ravines, and irregular hills; its smoothly rounded clumps of trees above the well-bottoms; its changing atmosphere, irresistibly heavy during the hot noonday solitude, soft and caressing when the flames of the camp-fire leaped up around the pot at night; the wild savanna, . . . peopled with strange spirits, whose names none dared to mention above a whisper, but to whose imaginary tales all the wild outlaws listened in silent wonderment, recognizing the magic of this illusory music that inspired them with a fierce, intoxicating sense of freedom as the sun rose, and with a creeping feeling of superstitious fear as the darkness closed in upon them, advancing from east to west like a tangible wall; a music that struck strange chords of reminiscence, calling up uncanny visions that made them shudder; sudden flashes of firearms; and, in the twilight, dead bodies gazing face upward at the sky, as deeply buried in their shroud of loneliness as had they been ten feet below ground. . . . The lurid glow of a smouldering rancho, and beyond the swaying smoke forms of flying horsemen; despairing cries of kidnapped women thrown across the saddle; and in the distance the answering wail of the prairie-wolf. . . . Voices of the storm, the angry tyrant of the desert;

voices of the flood; voices from above and beyond . . . a wonderful choir, singing more of terror and of sadness than of joy, yet always beautiful, solemn, awe-inspiring. . . .

Then the long, lazy life on the bosom of the great Magdalena River. . . .

And suddenly, Baranquilla, clear, white, distinct, in a flood of sunshine. . . .

At last the old man remembered. Yet even now that he saw things clearly, it was as one sees them in a dream, with a lurking consciousness of their unreality. The years passed swiftly before him, with their endless tale of violence and crime, bloodshed and debauch, when the wild animal passions that doubled his colossal strength and endurance controlled him absolutely, and made of him a fiend in human shape. Sailor or pirate, soldier or outlaw, miner or *gambusino*, Tres Palacios had left a bloody trail behind him. He lived in the towns when the revolutionary party was successful, and betook himself to the hills to await the next *pronunciamiento* whenever the government obtained the upperhand. And from these hills he and his men came down to levy toll on the inhabitants of the plain.

Once, without himself knowing why, he had rescued a child from a burning rancho, and as he played with the helpless, passive little bundle, it had occurred to him that this new pet was different from any he had had before. Tres Palacios was absolutely devoid of moral sense. He had hitherto looked upon babies as being no more than human puppies or kittens; but towards this particular one he felt differently, and the new sensation shamed and embarrassed him to such an

extent that he was tempted to throw the thing into some hole, and be rid of it. Yet some time during the following night he quietly saddled his horse, and without notifying any of his men, took the nearest road to Santiago, where he alighted before the house of Niña Tolosa.

"Here is something I want you to look after, Niña," he began, in his usual bullying way, and speaking in his gruffest voice. "I've tried it these three days, and I don't like it. Here is some money, and when that's gone I'll bring more. *Adiós!*"

And before the old woman had recovered from her astonishment he had made his way outside, and was busy tightening the *cincha*. At the last moment he walked quickly back into the house, took the baby up in his arms, and smiled at it while he twisted its soft little fingers one by one. After a little while he laid it down carefully, hesitated a minute, and finally bent over to kiss it. Then he remembered that he was not alone, and turned savagely on the old woman, who stood looking at this scene in silent wonderment.

"Niña!" he yelled into her ear, and pointed his finger at her face, "if that thing dies, I'll kill you!"

Six months later Tres Palacios appeared again in Santiago, and had a long interview with the baby and its nurse. He had brought with him a bag of gold from the washings, and seemed much astonished when told that it was not needed, as the first sum of money was still nearly intact. Until the Niña explained to him how little was really required, he was disposed to believe that his pet had not been properly treated, and this he was ready to resent. He was equally astonished

to learn that the thing was a girl, and had been baptized Teresa, it having been on that saint's day that the baby had been brought to town. On the whole, however, he was pleased. He deposited his gold with Don Cucho Garcia for safe-keeping, and, much to that gentleman's surprise, he asked him many questions concerning the education of his girls; also about convents, schools, and such matters generally. At bottom this middle-aged bandit was deeply ashamed of himself and of his feelings; yet in a vague, unexpressed way he felt satisfied with the present course of events; and when some of his former comrades urged him to join them in a raid beyond the border he refused, as much to his own astonishment as to theirs. Of right and wrong his conceptions were strangely incomplete; his philosophy of life was as logical and direct as that of a wild animal, which, wanting, takes whatever may be within its reach. So now he could have given no better reason for refusing to do wrong than lack of appetite.

Money he needed more than ever before, but it must be money that should keep. He was superstitious enough to believe that stolen riches are and must be easily, quickly spent, his own experience being in confirmation of that belief, and he thus determined to abandon the highway for the gulch, and to exchange his pistol for a pan. The Indian washings in the north were supposed to be very rich, but hitherto they had been protected by the animosity of the natives, who killed all intruders. To Tres Palacios this argument was a forcible one, but in favor of the venture rather than against it, and for many years he

spent two months out of every three in the lonely *cañadas*, and the third he passed in town with the child.

As Teresa grew older she learned to love the curious, violent, ugly old man who was so gentle and kind to her. He always brought her pretty presents, told her wonderful fairy tales, which were really but slightly altered experiences of his past life, and insisted upon her being spoiled in every possible way. Sometimes he took her out with him on to the savanna, taught her to ride and shoot, and the girl delighted in these flights away from the dull conventionality of town life. Over the camp fire in the evenings she sang to him his own wild songs, and together they made plans for the future. When she was old enough, the little thing said, she meant to marry him, so that they need never be separated. "You are not pretty to look upon, little father; you don't dress as nicely as the fine gentlemen in Santiago; and, *padrecito*, you *are* so black and so wrinkled! But that does not matter to me, for I *know* you are all beautiful and white inside; and then you *are* so strong! I've heard them say, '*That* Tres Palacios, *qué!* it would take the devil and another man to handle him.' Is it true, *padrecito?*"

Often, too, as she lay in his arms, wrapped in some old blanket, the old man would look wistfully at the pretty little creature, and regret that he were so old and unprepossessing. She was a beautiful child indeed, and Tres Palacios vowed that she should be rich and so well educated that the highest place in the land should be hers by right of beauty and of worth. As for himself, though the gold which he

had deposited on his return from every trip amounted to a large sum, he could not change his simple habits. He dressed in common cotton clothes, like any *peon*, wore leather sandals, lived on the simplest fare, and indulged himself only in the luxury of cleanliness.

So the years passed uneventfully enough until Teresa was wooed and won by a young gallant from Panamá, who was attracted as much by her fortune as by her beauty and accomplishments. Tres Palacios gave the bride away, and long after the church was empty the old man stood with folded arms in the shadow of a side aisle. He did not know how to pray, for none had taught him the proper words, and he did not understand that his longing was in itself an eloquent appeal. He remained in the deserted church because in his old age he was once more alone, and this was the only spot in town where the sense of his isolation would not be thrust upon him offensively. The old spirit of rebellion had gone out of him; he understood that he was old and poor (for he had given his all to Teresita), and that the young people would have no need for him. What he had learned in his youth of the cynical ways of the world came back to his memory now. The girl had loved him; she might even continue to love him in a mild, retrospective sort of way, but neither she nor her husband would want an uncouth old negro like himself loitering about the door of their fine house in town. Shame at his rags would of itself suffice to kill any lingering affection in Teresa's heart, while her husband would not hesitate to have him driven away, unless, of course, he were well paid for his indulgence. Women are submis-

sive creatures in these eccentric Spanish colonies, and Teresa would not dare to contradict her husband, so he must contrive to raise enough money to pay for the privilege of visiting his daughter. Why had he not thought of this before? The washings were nearly worked out now, and it was no easy matter to earn a thousand dollars in these days.

And so throughout the night, which had come on unnoticed by him, the old outlaw, unconsciously penitent, worked over the problem which he had asked the recording angel to put down against his name. Before sunrise he was on his way to the mountains, and, as he had rightly surmised, the happy couple wondered for a brief moment why he had not come to bid them God-speed, and forgot him again in the more important details of the departure.

A few months later the old man had visited them in their fine house in Panamá, and forever after the recollection of this visit comforted him in times of loneliness. He had taken with him a few little bags of gold-dust, in case they should be needed; but Teresa had welcomed him with open arms, and even her husband had seemed so glad to see him that Tres Palacios determined to put the money away against another visit. At the last moment, however, his heart had melted: he longed to offer some present to his little girl, and with foolish generosity he had given her one bag after another, until his whole store was exhausted.

The white horse neighed, and Tres Palacios awoke from his dream. The shadows had shifted well to the eastward, and the slanting shafts of light that pierced

the foliage showed that the afternoon was half spent. As he saddled the horse and packed his belongings together, the old man completed the story of his recollections; but he moved more slowly now, and the feverish excitement which marked his behavior a few hours before had entirely disappeared. As he proceeded with his work he talked aloud to himself, and there was deep sadness in his voice as he addressed himself with a sort of self-deprecating humility: "Tres Palacios, you old negro! you are old, you are ugly, you are weak, you are poor! Tres Palacios, who was your father? Have you a father? Eh? Where is he? What is his name, eh? Tres Palacios, who was your mother? You have no mother. If they were to meet, would they know each other? Yes or no? Answer me, you old negro! No, *no*, NO, NO! He would curse her . . . and she would laugh at him. And you, Tres Palacios, you, their son, would they recognize you? Yah! They would hate you, both of them. You are a living proof of their transgression. . . . Away with you! The river from the east and the river from the west came together, and where they met they caused a quicksand. What is a quicksand, Tres Palacios? What but a cause of trouble and sorrow and misfortune? Does a boat land on a quicksand? Does a man stand on a quicksand? Not even grass grows there; it is a tomb—greedy, hollow, never satisfied. Even the cross of God will sink and disappear, leaving no trace. . . . It is right that all should curse you. . . . What did she say to you—Teresa, the little one—in her sweet voice, full of tears and pity? What did she say to you? She said: 'Little father, though I love you, you must

go away; little father, you are old, you are poor, you dress in rags . . . and he does not like you. He says you may not come. . . . I would love you, but I may not. I would see you, but I may not. I would ask you to live with us, but I may not. "Where is the gold?" he asks. It is not one thousand, it is not two thousand, it is five thousand he wants. *Then* the old negro may come and stay.' Five thousand . . . ha! ha! I have *ten*, my Teresa, my little dove, and I am coming to stay with my little Teresa. I shall see her every day. I shall stand in the doorway, and as she goes out she will say, '*Adios, padrecito!*' I shall watch her, my Teresita, as she drives away, and laugh, and say to myself, 'That is my Teresa;' and when she comes home she will see me, and call out, 'Good-night, little father.' And the old negro will be happy. Why did I not kill him when he spoke thus—the cur, the mountain tiger, pretty to look upon, cruel, hard, greedy? . . . Why did I not drive my knife into him when he laughed at me and I was humiliated? Is he not her husband? That is it; that is why. Now I will *buy* him; I will be master in his house for a little while—as long as the gold lasts; and then . . . then, Tres Palacios, when the time comes, there will be room for your old carcass up in the *cañadas*, where you found the gold. By the deep black basin of the *charco del limon* you can lie down and say, 'The time has come.' During the rains you will be washed away —a bone here, and a bone there, after the fashion of the gold; and that will be the end."

It was dark when he reached the landing; the moon

was rising, and hung, like a vast yellow ellipse, low in the jungle about the river's mouth, spotting the surface of the water with spangles of light, over which they sailed in comparative silence. But a little later the bright disk cleared the bush, and poured a flood of silver over the schooner's deck; the men began to sing dull, colorless, melancholy songs, to which the long, wailing cries from the ranchos on the marsh-land served as a characteristic refrain. Then the wind freshened, and, as the invigorating salt breeze filled their lungs, the sailors burst into the wild war chant of San Salvador:

"Ten—ten—tententen—ten!
Ten—ten—tenten—ten—ten!
Marchémos, marchémos, con mucho valor;
Marchémos, en guerra, por San Salvador!
Ay, *ay*, AY, AY! la suerte ha cambiado.
Ayer era fraile, hoy soy soldado!"

Tres Palacios alone sat silent. Even when they started up his own well-known guerilla song,

"Casca, el padre de Cascarilla,
Nació, se casó, y murió en la silla!"

he contented himself with mechanically beating time on the deck planks. Seated on his valise, the only thing he had brought with him, he gazed ahead over the bowsprit, looking for the twin towers of old Panamá, which he should see long before they swung round to the north in the harbor of the modern port. Rumors of trouble and actual fighting in the town of Panamá itself had reached Santiago; but to the old outlaw such news seemed natural enough; nor did he begin to understand how they could affect him directly, until the morning of the second day, when a boat

put out to meet and warn the captain against landing any passengers.

Tres Palacios thought otherwise; the boat that had brought the news could certainly take him back. So, while the schooner tacked and bore off towards the mouth of the Rio Grande, he was rowed back to town.

The tide was out, and he landed on the shelf of rocks in front of the fort, where the sailors left him. A few minutes later he had climbed the weathered wall and stood inside the lines, not half a mile from Teresita's house. At this early hour there were usually scores of business men taking their morning walk, but to-day the broad boulevard was silent and deserted. With his bag over his shoulder, Tres Palacios lounged along leisurely, watching out of the corners of his eyes, and more alarmed at the unusual silence than had there been active fighting in the streets. His progress was arrested by a barricade built across the road in front of one of the barracks. Under its shelter fifty or sixty men lay, half asleep, beside their arms. Beyond, the windows of the *Cuartel* seemed deserted; not a musket was seen, nor even the gay color note of a uniform. He crept up to the top of the wall and cautiously looked across; but just as his head emerged from behind the stones a couple of shots fell, he felt a pull at his hair, and a moment later a drop of blood trickled over his forehead, and remained hanging on his heavy eyebrows.

"I wonder on which side I am fighting?" the old man said to himself, as he dodged behind the wall. "At any rate, if the fellows can shoot as straight as this, matters cannot yet be very serious." But before he could obtain any information a heavy report rang

out beyond; a paving-stone shot downward from the coping, and, ricochetting, struck him sufficiently hard to knock him off his feet. In a second the old *guerillero's* blood was up, and he had taken command, for the others soon recognized his superiority and accepted him as their leader. Three times within an hour the barricade was attacked, and three times the old man drove the assailants back, still ignorant of the party for which he was fighting and of the meaning of the flag which had been thrust into his hands. But little, indeed, did he care for the cause of the fight; he was in it, and now, right or wrong, it was too late to draw back.

But the fourth attack was successful. A small field gun had been wheeled into position, and the loosely built barricade rapidly melted before its blows. The bugle sounded a charge, and a few minutes later the defenders were swept back and the street cleared. Tres Palacios was but slightly wounded; but he knew that the fight was over, and that the best thing to do was to lie quiet and wait for a favorable opportunity of escape. Long before the soldiers had reached the wall he had dropped on his face near one side of the street, and lay perfectly motionless, covering his valise with his body, and to all appearances a corpse. They trampled him underfoot as they passed, but the old man's limbs merely rolled aside a little, limp and heavy as those of a dead man, and no one paid any further attention to him. Unfortunately the soldiers, finding no enemy to pursue, returned before Tres Palacios had had time to rise; and one of these, a mere child, drunk with his first bloodshed, and boasting of the number of men he had killed, stumbled over the prostrate body, and fell head-

long on to the pavement. He picked himself up with an oath, and, turning savagely, drove his bayonet with all his strength through the old man's back. But the half-spoken curses died on his lips, for the ghastly crunching of the steel through the resisting bones sickened him, and, without waiting to look at the effect of his blow, he dropped the musket and ran away, holding his hands before his face.

It was evening when the old man opened his eyes. Save for a dull, heavy burning somewhere in his body —he could not exactly say where—he felt numb and cold. His mouth was full of blood, and when he breathed it seemed as though some one were fanning red coals on his breast; streams of fire broke away slowly from the central wound and trickled outward to the very tips of his fingers before they passed away, only to be followed by others. He endeavored to remember what had happened, but his agony was so great that he gave a gurgling cry and swooned again.

A few hours later he awoke a second time, suddenly, as from a deep sleep; his mind seemed perfectly clear, and the events of the last twenty-four hours passed rapidly before him, not as they really were, but as he would have had them to be. Below his left arm he felt the hard ridges of the valise that contained the price, or ransom, of his happiness. Teresa's house was only a few yards away, and now, at last, he should see her. Only a few minutes more to wait! He pictured to himself how he should knock at the great door and ask to see Teresa's maid; how he should send word to her. Should he merely say, "Tres Palacios has come," or should he send up the gold first? No, he could not

leave the gold. Some one might steal it, and he shuddered at the thought of what that would mean to him. No, he must take it up himself. Only a few minutes more now; why should he hurry? The mere thought of the great happiness to come made him so happy now that he hesitated to move, and he waited until a bell rang out the hour somewhere in the town.

"Now!" he said, and made an effort to rise; but the paralyzed muscles refused to obey, and with the suddenness of a stroke of lightning the poor old dreamer understood.

This was the end, then—to die miserably in the street alone, like a poisoned cur, a few yards only from his little Teresa, and happiness just beyond his grasp! The gold—*her* gold—what would become of that? Up in the lonely gulches his heart had leaped with joy as he had gathered his treasure grain by grain; he remembered how at one time he would have sold an ounce of his blood for an ounce of the yellow metal, and now that the yellow gold was turned to red, he would have given the whole treasure for a little of the life-blood that stained it.

He groaned aloud. "God, God, it is not right!" and sobbed with wild, impotent rage. "Die! No, he should not, he could not die thus!" With a superhuman effort he raised himself a little from the ground and crawled forward a few inches, gulping down the blood that filled his mouth, and choking the hysterical cries of pain that burst from him in his agony. Hour after hour, with fierce determination, he wrestled with death; and inch by inch he dragged himself nearer to the iron-bound door that to him was the gate of

heaven. But as the night waned his struggles became weaker, his swoons became more frequent and lasted longer, and the fever that enabled him to concentrate the remains of his colossal strength burned lower and lower. He alternately hoped he knew not what, and despaired again as his consciousness ebbed away. His mind wandered, and he forgot his surroundings. In a vague, indistinct way, he remembered the old days in Santiago; but these blurred pictures were disconnected and meaningless beside the one intense purpose of these last moments.

Through the long hours of the soft, tropical night he struggled fiercely, desperately; groaning, gasping, biting the paving-stones in his agony, and repeating, in a thick, choked voice, that no longer sounded like anything human, "Teresa, my little one! Teresa, my little daughter!" while, unconscious of his suffering, the girl slept quietly in the great house over the way.

From above, the moon and the stars watched him, unmoved, and passed on their way—and the soft blue night-light gradually turned to gray. The streets were silent and deserted. In the morning twilight the heavy dews rose slowly from the ground and hung in shreds of mist between the houses, swinging to and fro in the faint sea-breeze, and imperceptibly drifting towards the interior. On the wet pavement before the door, that glistened as if covered with a thin layer of snow, the cramped body of the old negro lay across the narrow street, at the end of an irregular brown line that ran like a loose ribbon towards the débris of the barricade. From the soldiers' quarters the hoarsely shrill tones of

the bugle sounded the reveille; a gun boomed in the distance, announcing that it was day once more, and with a sudden spasmodic jerk Tres Palacios raised himself on his side. For a moment he glared around with eyes that could no longer see, and appeared to listen. A few drops of blood trickled down from the corners of his mouth, and under the ghastly smile of his purple lips his teeth glistened, horribly white.

"Te . . . Teres. . . !" but the cry died in a gurgle; his head fell forward, and slowly he sank down to the ground. It was the end. And once more the street was silent.

An hour later the door opened, and a young man, stepping out, looked up and down the street. He shuddered slightly as he noticed the corpse, and, wondering why it should be lying there, he raised the head with his foot and recognized Tres Palacios. At the other end of the bloody streak that marked the track of his struggle during the night lay a black, square valise, and the young man ran towards it. By its weight he guessed the contents, and, raising it to his shoulder, he walked quickly back to the house, pausing only to kick the passive corpse before his door.

"I was in luck at the club last night," he said to his wife later, as he brought her some of the gold; "and this is for the bracelet I promised you so long ago."

Meantime the American sailors had taken possession of Panamá and cleared the streets. And thus this black Lear of the savanna, poor, unknown, yet loyal to the end, was buried by strangers in the common insurgents' grave. There was none to mourn his death.

As the time passed and he never came, Teresa sometimes wondered what had become of Tres Palacios. But who should know what happened in the lonely gorges where the old man hunted for gold?

LOUIS NAPOLEON *alias* JOSHUA POTTS

LOUIS NAPOLEON *alias* JOSHUA POTTS

I

WHEN I first knew Potts he was travelling throughout the West as a drummer for the well-known dry-goods house of W. Gee & Co. I had passed a cold, snowy February afternoon kicking my heels against the door-post of a dingy little station in Utah, and when the train at last whistled into the yard I was in no very sociable frame of mind. There was but one sleeper, and, as all the berths were engaged, I was obliged to go forward into the smoking-car, hoping vaguely to find some solace, if not sleep, in the smoke of sundry cigars. Just as I had lapsed into the state which is politely referred to as "nodding," a man leaned over the back of my seat and said, in what was meant to be a very suave and bland manner:

"May I trouble you for a light, boss?"

"The trouble is all made, stranger," I answered, sitting up. "Here, take my stump, and be —— to you."

"Well, that's one way of doing it; but thanks for the light, anyway," he answered, quite unruffled. "As for the blessing you chucked in free, gratis and for nothing, guess you must have come on the Eastern

train; had to wait six hours at Ocho, eh? Well, waiting *do* disagree with a man, that's a fact, sir; a solemn, bare, uncompromising fact—one of them kind as fetches a man every time. Never knew it to fail. Now I've been up this blank road a dozen times, I guess, and I've never missed being blanked by somebody for any civility I ever asked or offered. Part of my travelling expenses, you see. What line are you in?"

"Railroading just now, I guess," I answered, shortly.

"Oh, I see," was the rejoinder. "Sociable as a grizzly, eh? And I don't blame you for it. Going to Grove City, are you? Well, put up at Parks's. You can't miss it; only house in the place, and decent at that. Well, you want to snooze, I suppose, and I don't—see? You belong in the sleeper, and I in the smoker—different lines, eh? I don't like your samples, and you don't seem to be mashed on mine. Well, so long! See you to-morrow." And with a nod he passed on, while I dropped into a fitful sleep.

Half an hour later, as I turned over in my seat, I heard my friend singing a solo in the baggage compartment, and to the third or fourth line of the song the train man yelled a chorus consisting solely of some energetic interjection. For some time I listened dreamily to the monotone of the wheels—chuggety-chug, chunkety-kunkety-unk, unkety-chunkety unkety-unk—and in the domain of inarticulate sound these nonsense-rhymes suggested a dead and dreary landscape overhung by a leaden sky. Now and then, as for a brief moment I started into a somnolent semi-consciousness, the refrain of the song flashed over my imaginary

landscape like a streak of lightning, and in such silly words as these: "Mackintosh, by Gosh!"—chuggety-ug, chunkety-unk, uggety-wuggety, uggety-unk—went the next verse; and I anticipated the chorus: "Then said Josh, by Gosh! Suckotash, by dash! Twiddle-de-um, by Gum! Senator Dodd, by ——!" unkety-wunkety, unkety-unk—unkety, wunkety, wunke—and I was asleep again.

Several hours later I awoke, sat up, and looked around. The lamps had burned low; some had gone out, others still smoked on, and in my drowsy frame of mind this seemed a natural result of their location in the smoker. Here and there in the semi-darkness a loud snoring revealed the prostrate presence of a fellow-traveller, and to the song he sang through his nose I responded, mechanically: "Mackintosh, by Gosh! Hog-wash, by Gosh!" I have no doubt that I honestly believed I was making some very creditable verses, whereas my brain was really like a clock-case without a dial, and the pendulum swinging noisily and aimlessly to and fro. Then we stopped suddenly, with a vicious jerk that knocked all the poetry and a good deal of the sleep out of us, and stumbled out into the snow. Some kind of a conveyance offered a welcome shelter, and a moment later we seemed to be standing before a desk, where a clerk in his shirt-sleeves pointed out the line in the vicinity of which we were to write our name and residence. Somebody called out, most impertinently I thought, "Number seven this way, up one flight, second door to your left!" And, unable to find any matches, too sleepy to call for a boy, who probably did not exist, and too lazy to undress, I

groped my way to a sitting posture on the bed, kicked off my boots, and was soon far away—somewhere in "desolate, wind-swept space."

I had hardly taken my seat on the following morning before the table covered with erst-white oil-cloth, and dotted with samples of the unwritten *menu*, when my drummer acquaintance of the night before strode into the room and took the opposite chair.

"Feel hunky this glorious Sabbath morn?" he began. "So do I. Hunky's the word; hungry's the feeling, *that's* a fact. But 'knock, and it shall be—' Look at that steak!" and he raised the meat on the end of his fork, humming, as he held it near his nose, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot?" "This belongs to you, sir, I suppose," he went on, putting the meat down again. "John! *John!* JOHN! That waiter isn't coming, sir," he continued, in a confidential tone of voice, "until the spirit moves him, as the parsons say. Well, I like that spirit, sir; free country, sir, and all that kind of thing; effete civilization of the East, manly independence of the West; great American buzzard, wings out, and screaming with an indigestion of liberty. That's the Grove City *News'* style. Romantic school —Victor Hugo, Ouida, and — that French nigger—what's his name?—oh, Dum*ass*, all in one. Editor runs the hotel; poet (that's his wife) runs the kitchen; foreign correspondent (that's the daughter) runs the chamber-work. Well, how're you making out?"

"I thought you told me this was a very decent house," I answered.

"Well, now, ain't it? What's the matter with it, anyway? You pays your money—two dollars a day

for you, fifty and five off for me—and you takes your choice. Hullo, John, here you are at last! Glad to see you, old man! Mary's well, is she? That's good. And the baby, John, *how's* the baby? Fine? That's first-rate. And how am I? Well, John, I'm hungry. Let's have some breakfast; what do *you* say, eh? Dry toast and muffins; tea this morning. Did you know, John, I can't drink coffee nowadays? It's a fact. Can't do it, sir. I'd tell you all about it, but perhaps you wouldn't want to hear now. Tea it is, then, plain Oolong, with a dash of green in it; steak, medium; lyon-aze potatoes; sliced tomatoes, canned; I prefer 'em canned, John—that's a *pe*-culiar but solemn fact; oatmeal and cream, of course; scalloped oysters; pickled asparagus; two mutton-chops well done, brown on the outside, you know; and eggs—well, eggs fried this morning, John; and don't forget the milk—straight without chalk or water: you know I'm a *connyssoor* on milk. Anything else? Well, I guess not; that'll do for a single meal. I'm not hog-hungry this morning, that's a fact. I don't suppose you've any fried chicken, have you? No? well, never mind, then."

"You don't happen to want any collar-buttons, cuff-links, or anything in that line, do you, sir?" he went on, addressing me. "No, I didn't somehow think you did; but business is business, sir, that's a fact. Now, just to show you. This morning, when I went down to the pump—I always wash at the pump when I can, you know—I met the foreign correspondent, daughter of the house, you know. Twenty and some odd summers, champagne (Pacific coast) hair, Beverly eyes, New York mouth, Boston deportment, New Orleans hands, Chi-

cago feet—real pan-American girl, and you bet she's a daisy. 'Well,' I says, with a view to business, 'Priscilla, you're a—well, you're a thoroughbred. Now, I tell you what I'll do, Priscilla: I'll give you twenty-five cents for a kiss; no one looking; you'll make it cheap; now don't go for to say no!' 'Nap,' says she, 'you go to —Jericho.' She's foreign correspondent for the *News*, you know, and sort of lavish with them foreign places. Well, just then I spied old Parks, and business kind of roused in my breast. 'Tell you what it is, Priscilla,' says I, 'if you'll earn that quarter and spend it on my goods, I'll give you one gross corrugated hair-pins—Watkins's make, best in the market—and two solid gold-metal studs, patented, and, by gosh, durn *me* if I don't throw in a pair of celluloid cuff trimmings!' 'Nap,' says she, 'do you mean it?' 'Priscilla,' says I, 'did I ever lie? Them articles is worth four dollars and eighty-four cents, and you know I can't lie; couldn't do it for no price; family peculiarity inherited from George Washington, my—ahem!—my ancestor; and I give 'em to you for twenty-five cents—one quarter. Think of it, Priscilla!' Well, sir, she tumbled! Cost me eighteen cents; profit seven—over thirty per cent. Memorandum: Sundries, spent twenty-five cents. Received (private account) seven cents and one kiss, credited to Priscilla Parks, of Grove City. That's business, sir—dry-goods and notions business. Here's my card. And may I ask what your line is?"

"Mining," I answered.

"Oh! a mining sharp, eh? I beg your pardon, sir; mere form of speech, I assure you. And haven't I met you before? Let's see. Isn't your name Goss—

William B. No, that ain't it, quite. William *G.* Goss? I thought so."

"Well, and what is your name?" I interrupted, determined to meet him on his own ground.

"Louis Napoleon Potts, sir," he answered, in a manner that was meant to be impressive. "To be sure," he went on, a moment later, "that's not the name I was christened by. Josh Potts is what they call me at home; but then I look so much like him—I mean I've been told it so often—I thought I'd change. It sounds well, too—Louis Napoleon Potts: don't you think it does? And I *do* look like him; there's no mistake about that. You've seen him, I suppose? Well, that's what I'm called. Nap, for short; but in Salt Lake, or Cheyenne, or Omaha, I'm Louis Napoleon Potts. I thought it was a shame to let such an opportunity go by. Helps me immensely, especially in prints. Gutenberg invented printing, you know, and I tell 'em Potts is the English for it—lineal descendant, through the women, you know—the *Louis* proves that. Well, joking aside now, don't you think I do look like him?" And he complacently stroked his mustachios and pulled his long imperial.

II

Several years later, at a crowded crossing, I ran into an overdressed man, whom I at once recognized as my friend Potts. His mustachios were carefully waxed

and drawn out, and his make-up was excellent. Even the baggy, unhealthy look under the eyes was accurately copied from some recent photograph. He was a perfect caricature of his idol. To my surprise, he recognized me at once.

"You don't say! you don't say!" he kept repeating as we stood on the curb-stone shaking hands. "Well, who'd 'a thought it? How are the mines? Poor business that, eh? Well, I tell you, *I've* struck it. Got a hotel down Grass Market Square. I tell *you*, sir, a bang-up little place it is, too. Come round. Glad to see you any time. Come round *now*. John L. drops in now and then, and fellows like him. Now you come and see my bar. It's worth seeing, I tell *you*. You know I always liked you, professor. There's nothing mean about you. I always said there wasn't. Well, how's the mines? Now look a-here, what are you doing just now? Oh, hang your train! come round and see *me*. I'll show you a nice, quiet little corner. Got Stearns & Co. to do it for me. All mahogany and fancy glass. I tell *you* it's worth seeing." And before I could find an excuse he had passed his arm through mine and was dragging me towards his place.

On the way there we met P——, the writer, who looked at me twice before acknowledging my salutation; for the shiny silk hat of my companion, cockily tilted on one side, and the large, loud, and uncompromising check suit beneath it that forced itself upon the notice of every passer-by, intimidated and shocked him. But if I had hesitated before, P——'s evident astonishment dispelled my doubts. In quest of information, I

had followed my subjects into worse places than that whither I was bound, and the feeling that my friend might object to my liberty of life but made me more determined to be independent. So I followed Louis Napoleon—or Joshua—to his gilded cavern.

"What do you think of that?" he said, pausing before the usual nightmare of shining brass, polished mahogany, and colored glass, and putting his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat. "Neat, eh? None of your Pullman-palace-car nonsense for me. No, sir; not in my place. This, now, is chaste and artistic and —well—refined. Don't you think so? Now you come into my den; I call it my study. Takes brains to run a place like this, and so I think over things in here over a glass of gin and water—same as Byron used to. Set down. Now what 'll you have? Them cigars I pride myself on. Go ahead, man; take a handful and put 'em in your pocket. There! Well, now tell me about yourself. What are *you* doing? How are you getting on? Take your coat off if you feel like it; this is liberty hall, sir—hospitality on tap at all hours, and the best brands. Solid—that's anything you've a mind to order; liquid—well, I guess you know all about that; gas*ee*ous—that's what I call tobacco smoke. There's only one thing I ain't quite finished in here, and perhaps you might give me a hint or two. Them shelves there, that's to be my library, and somehow I've never got on to making the list. Ought to be brown and gold, I think, with every sixth or seventh book red. Don't you think so? Ain't that a brilliant and chaste idea? I thought you'd like that. It's quiet, that's a fact. Oh, you're looking at my pict-

ure. That one there on the right, that's the real Louis Napoleon—that was. This one's myself. Sort of owed it to his memory to put him next to me, you know, just to show how near I come to look like him. I want to go abroad and see the place he lived in—Twilleries, I guess they called it—and I don't want to finish this place until I see what his peculiar style was. I want to improve on it, and I can do it, too; but then, somehow, the idea has taken hold of me that I ought to live up to this likeness. That's the bottom of it all. *You* don't believe we was made like as twins without a purpose, do you? There's a moral in it, sir. Yes, sir, that's a fact, and I've caught on. And I'll tell you what that moral is. It's just this: Josh Potts in America is just as big a man as Louis Napoleon ever was in France. And why? Simply because an American citizen in his own country is equal to any kind of emperor, or czar, or king, or I don't care what you call him, in God's world. That's the meaning of my parable. Well, now I've told it you, it don't, somehow, seem quite as clear to me as before," he added, reflectively; "but you understand what I mean: Louis Napoleon over there is simply Joshua Potts when he's in America."

"Yes," I answered. "I see what you are after; but it's a poor rule that does not work both ways. Josh Potts wouldn't amount to much in France, likeness and all."

"And that is quite right," he interrupted, shrewdly. "Josh Potts ain't got no business in France—no American has. That's my idea. Fishes belong in the water and birds in the air, just as sure as angels belong in

heaven. Yes, sir; to my mind, an American as lives in France is the same thing as a lion in a menagerie cage. He ain't nothing but a part of the side show. Nobody's afraid of him; he's lost the only thing makes life worth living, and that's his liberty. And what's he got for it? People come and look at him behind his gilt-edge bars, and says, if it's in Paris, 'That's an American;' and if it's at Barnum's, 'That's a lion, or a tiger, or an eagle,' labelled, of course; and in both places, sir—you mark what I say—they pities him, or *it*—a poor thing without a country and without any freedom. Well— Have another glass, won't you? Do."

III

During the next year or two I kept meeting my friend Potts in the most crowded thoroughfares, and his attire vouched for his prosperity. On such occasions he would come up to me with an unctuous smile, lay his left hand on my coat collar, and while he shook my right, he would affectionately test the muscles of my arm downward from shoulder to elbow. In spite of his atrocious vulgarity, I liked the man, perhaps because of his worship for all things American, a capability I often envied him. In his own narrow-minded way he was a patriot; not a man to arouse the country in time of peril, but a man to respond to a call for help, and to bring others with him. Why he liked me I never knew, and, indeed, never really believed that he

did until one day I received a letter from Potts, asking me to call at his hotel on private and important business.

He was evidently very glad to see me, for he came forward with both hands outstretched, and caught me by the elbows.

"I say, old fellow—I beg your pardon—Mr. Goss; I'm damned glad to see you. Walk in. I'm awful glad you've come. Now what'll you have? Gin and soda, as usual? That's so. Well, here's my regards."

While he was sipping his glass I noticed with some astonishment that Potts's style of dress had undergone a great change. His clothes were dark and simple, and the conspicuous jewelry he usually wore was gone. Moreover, he seemed to be troubled about something.

"Well, Josh," I said, after a long pause, during which he gazed absently into his glass, "what's the matter? What can I do for you?"

"I'm afraid, Mr. Goss," he began, in a manner entirely devoid of his usual buoyant familiarity—"I'm afraid I've been taking considerable of a liberty with you. But then I looked around among my pals, and I took 'em up one by one, and I just had to put 'em all down again. Weighed in the balance, you know, and all come out light. Then somehow I thought of you. 'By gosh!' says I, '*that's* my man.' So I wrote you, you know."

"Why, are you in trouble, Josh?" I asked.

He hesitated before answering; then cocking his head on one side in rather a ludicrous way, he asked, "Did you ever know I had a mother, Mr. Goss?"

"Well, Josh," I said, lightly, not quite understand-

ing what he was driving at, "I never *knew* you had a mother, but it wasn't unnatural to suppose you had one, was it?"

"That's so," he answered—"that's so. Well, sir, when I begun to make money I got the old woman to come down from the farm in Vermont, and we kind of settled down together out at Maidwell. Little house, you know; small and all that kind of thing, but comfortable, and we've been a-living there three years come next March, nicely—yes, sir, nicely indeed. Well, sir, about a month ago she was took sick—my mother, I mean. I done all I could; fixed up the windows with weather-strips, put in a new patent furnace, and them kind of things generally. Then I got the doctor about twice a week. And it didn't do a bit of good, sir. She took it into her head she was a-going to die, and Dr. Trott he said he couldn't do nothing. Then she's got kind of queer. Don't like me to be in the liquor business, and all that sort of thing. Well, I do believe she's ailing, and I'm kind of scairt. Then it don't seem quite right to go on a-making money this way, when it goes against her. Does it, now? It's a pity to give all this up," he added, wistfully gazing at his beloved gorgeousness; "but then it's my mother, professor. That's why I asked you to come. 'He'll tell me,' says I, 'what's right; so I'll just drop him a line to come round and lend me a hand.' Now, professor, what shall I do?" And as I hesitated, he said, "Well, now, suppose *you* was in my fix, what would you do?"

"I'd give the whole thing up, Josh," I answered, "and see the best doctor in town."

He got up from his chair, and walked nervously

around the room. Then he came up to me, and held out his hand. "Thanks, Mr. Goss," he said. "I guess that would be the square thing to do. It comes mighty hard, I tell you, but I'll do it—I'll do it right off. And —and there's one thing more, professor: just sit down and drop me a line to the best doctor you know, just to tell him I'm all right as far as cash goes. It's for the old woman, you know, and it wouldn't be right to mind the expense."

IV

During the year that followed his mother's death I did not see very much of Potts. He wandered about town in an aimless, disconsolate sort of way, and, to tell the honest truth, I found him somewhat of a bore. His former vivacity was all gone, and he kept asking such perplexing questions about right and wrong as a boy of twelve might have invented; so that—I acknowledge it to my shame—I often endeavored to avoid this man whose blunt honesty and integrity of feeling I could not but admire.

One day—I had just returned to town from an absence of several months—I met Josh on the Common. He was, as usual, delighted to see me, and seemed in the best of health and spirits.

"Well, Josh," I said, after a while, "the world is all right again, is it? Tell me what you are about. I see by your manner that you've found something to do."

"I have, Mr. Goss. You see, that kind of loafing around, with nothing to do after breakfast but to wait for dinner, and nothing after dinner but to wait for supper—I tell you that kind of thing is bad for a man; so I quit. I belong to the fire-brigade now, sir."

"Why, how did you happen to choose that, Josh?" I asked. "There's no money in it, and you were always pretty keen on the dollar."

"That's so; that's a fact," he answered. "But it come to me one day that I had all the money I wanted—enough to live on, you know; no family, no anybody but myself; and so I says to myself: 'Josh, what are you here for, anyway? You wasn't made to loaf around doing nothing—no good to nobody. What are you going to do?' Well, sir, for nigh upon six weeks, I guess it was, I traipsed round the streets and didn't see nothing. Then one day, while I was watching a fire, I see a fellow come out; kind of used up he was, and weak on his legs. So I went up to him, and kind of talked to him for a while. He was a married man, with three kids, I found out, and that set me a-thinking. If that man, as is married, got a wife and three young uns to look after, can go a-risking his life to pull people out of a fire, why shouldn't Louis Napoleon Potts, who hasn't a soul in the world to care whether he kicks the bucket or fills it at the well? That's why I'm a fireman, Mr. Goss. Come down and look at the engine, won't you?"

V

So I got into the habit of dropping in at the engine-house to talk with Potts and see the men, and one evening while I was there the alarm rang. Josh told me where it was, and I hurried off to see him at work. When I arrived upon the scene the fire had made great headway, and the engines seemed as useless as toys. The walls of the house threatened to cave in; and as the inmates had all been saved, the men were holding back. Suddenly a woman, frantic with grief and despair, rushed up to the group of which Potts was one, and in heart-rendering tones she besought some one of them to go after her child, who had been left behind in the fiery furnace. But the men shook their heads, and answered, as she turned to one after another: "It's no good, madam. No man could live there more than half a minute, and the walls will be down before any of us could reach the place."

Then I saw Josh come forward. He said something to the woman, who clasped her hands and fell forward on her knees. His comrades endeavored to argue with him, to prove the impossibility of the attempt; but Josh merely answered, in his quiet, drawling way, "Nothing is impossible, boys, till you've tried, and I've sort of made up my mind to try."

"You won't come back, Nap," some one called out.

"Well, perhaps not; that's a fact. We'll see about

that later, though," he answered, phlegmatically, as he coiled a rope about him. And the next minute he had disappeared in the smoke.

With that extraordinary intuition that makes a crowd the mouth-piece either of God or of the devil, the men in the street had understood both the heroism and the peril of the attempted rescue. Breathless, they watched the sullen, threatening pile of bricks, through every opening of which long tongues of flame shot out, to be quenched in the whirl of smoke and steam, and the seconds passed slowly as their hearts beat fast.

Suddenly, in the silence of voices, the half-crazed woman rose to her feet and cried out: "There he is! there he is! My boy! oh, my boy!" and burst into a paroxysm of tears. And straddling the sill of a window on the second floor, the black silhouette of Josh appeared against the lurid red background. We could not hear his cries, but he certainly must have heard the cheer that broke from us in the darkness below—a cheer that burst from our breasts like a cry of intense pain followed by intense relief. For the tears in my eyes I could not see what he was doing; but a moment later some of his comrades rushed forward, and returned out of the smothering smoke, bearing the rescued child in their arms.

"Make the rope fast, Nap, and come down quick, for God's sake—quick!" some one called out.

But ere the words were fairly spoken, the walls bulged out, and the figure of a man loomed up through the flames, riding the falling masonry like some legendary helmsman on the poop of a sinking ship; and with a crash the great building collapsed.

A few hours later, in the hospital, the doctor bent forward and said to me, "I suppose you know his name?"

Before I could answer, the wounded man opened his eyes, and with a faint, pathetic semblance of his old, bright manner, he said, in a low voice: "Professor, tell him it's only Joshua Potts, that's all. I guess that Louis Napoleon racket is played out now. Did the kid come out all right? Don't put on any gloves with me, doctor; I know what's the matter. Just give me something to brace up on; I've a thing or two I want to talk over with this gentleman."

VI

THREE days later we buried him; and as I walked back from the little country graveyard where we had laid him to rest forever, I felt a strange admiration for this much-maligned human family that knows its heroes only after death. For this man, whom the world knew merely as a vulgar, swaggering, uneducated bartender, possessed that spark of divine fire which no education, no refinement, no teaching, can kindle where God has not put it.

THE DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE OF THE BRIGANTINE "MARIA DIVINA"

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NOTE.—The brigantine *Maria Divina* has at various times during the last fifteen years occupied so much space in the daily newspapers that her name, at least, must be well known to a large number of readers. It seems, therefore, worth while to publish the following documents, which not only record her history and final wreck, but at the same time explain the mysterious disappearance of her captain and crew. Various fictitious explanations of this mystery have already been offered, but as they partake rather of the nature of hoaxes, the editor of these documents feels justified in publishing the following selection of as many as seem necessary to make the case intelligible from beginning to end. It is needless to add that they are faithful transcripts of the originals in Washington.

PONTA DELGADA, SAN MIGUEL, AZORES (date).

The Hon. Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.:

SIR,—In compliance with orders received from the Department that a thorough investigation be made into the mystery surrounding the disappearance of captain and crew of the American brigantine *Maria Divina*, I beg herewith to transmit my official report of results obtained. To facilitate a review of the whole case, I have prefixed to the latest documents a full copy of all important communications in my possession. For the truth of document No. XV. I cannot vouch personally, not having obtained it from an official source. It is

my belief, however, that in the main the information contained therein may be considered reliable.

I began my investigation on the island of Santa Maria, Azores (or Western Islands), that being, according to No. IV., the nearest land at the date of interruption of the ship's log. I personally interviewed every foreign resident on the island, and also many native officials, devoting considerable time to the lower classes of fishermen; but after a month of diligent research I was obliged to come to the conclusion that the story was absolutely unknown.

I next sailed over to the group of rocks known as the Formigas, and examined each one carefully for wreckage débris, the result being again absolutely negative.

I then transferred my headquarters to the large island of San Miguel; its northern shore is comparatively uninhabited, but, especially at the eastern end, well watered, heavily wooded, and healthy. Owing to its location, isolation, and natural advantages, it affords excellent opportunities for protracted concealment; and as I firmly believed that some of the survivors of that ill-fated crew had reached land safely, I began a careful examination of the shore. On the third day I found a piece of plank on which, after some cleaning, the letters MAR— D— were still distinctly visible. Not being successful in my subsequent explorations, I repaired to Ponta Delgada with my discovery, and examined the records. These unfortunately proved that on May 18, 1879, the ship *Mario D'Este* had been wrecked on the point near which I had found the plank, and consequently, having nothing further to guide me, I began a systematic inter-

viewing of the population of the island. My success was no greater than it had been at Santa Maria, until an old fisherman advised me to consult a retired English doctor, now living on his *quinta* by the Furnas lake, and who, from a long and constant practice of prying into other people's affairs, possessed an extraordinary knowledge of local history.

This gentleman received me with generous hospitality, and listened attentively to my *exposé* of the case. Before answering he took down a book from a shelf above his desk and put it into my hands.

"That, lieutenant," he said, as I took the volume from him, "is my diary for the year 1873. Unless I am mistaken, you will find somewhere about the middle of September a few pages that will throw some light on the case, and of course you will have full liberty to copy them, and use the information in any way you wish. As you will find all the data in writing, it would be useless for me to add anything *vivâ voce* now, unless it be, first, that the man who told me the story seemed educated far above his station; indeed, I believe that he must have been a college-bred man, who for some reason or other had been obliged to conceal his identity—a supposition which is strengthened by his own admission that his past would not bear investigation; and, second, that when I was writing down the facts on the day following his death, I discovered that he had omitted to give me either his own name or that of the ship. However, the dates, the circumstances, and my own conjectures are too curiously coincident with the official facts which you have given me to allow of any room for doubt."

Under No. XV. you will find a true copy of the extract from the doctor's diary; and as I believe that the mysterious disappearance of the brig's crew is thus fully accounted for, I shall consider my special mission at an end.

Respectfully,

JAMES S. BUCHANAN, U. S. N.

I.

(*Newspaper clipping from Gibraltar "Chronicle" of Dec.* 13, 1872.)

MARINE INTELLIGENCE.

Arrived, Dec. 13:—

Steamers: *Maria Essora*, from Santander; *Sousa*, from Lisbon.

Schooner: *Mirabella*, from Cadiz.

Brigantine: *Maria Divina*, from New York (derelict brought in by crew of *Dei Gratia*).

II.

(*Manuscript copy of No.* 123.)

CONSULATE OF THE U. S., GIBRALTAR, *Dec.* 13, 1872.

Hon. Assis't Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.:

SIR,—I beg to inform you that the American brigantine *Maria Divina*, of New York, has this day been brought into this port by the mate and two of the crew of the Nova Scotian brigantine *Dei Gratia*, which latter vessel arrived here on the previous evening.

The *Maria Divina* was met, abandoned at sea, on the 4th instant, in lat. 38° 20′ N., long. 17° 15′ W., loaded with a cargo of alcohol from New York, supposed to be bound to Genoa. No ship's papers were found on

board except the log-book, which has entries up to the 22d or 23d ultimo; nor were any boats found on board. The vessel is said to leak some, but her new crew had no difficulty to bring her into this port. She is now in the custody of the Vice-Admiralty Court, and is being treated as a derelict. The master of the *Dei Gratia* claims salvage, and would prefer settling the matter out of court, if possible, to avoid court formalities and other expenses.

I have telegraphed to the New York Board of Underwriters, and also to Genoa, on the subject of this disaster, and, though prepared to do all in my power for the protection of the interests of those concerned, can do nothing more for the present, as the court will not recognize any party claiming the property in its hands unless accompanied by a power of attorney from the rightful owners of the *Maria Divina* and from the holders of the bills of lading of the cargo on board of her, which facts I have forwarded at once to New York and Genoa.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

H. B. SPRAGNELL, U. S. Consul.

III.

(*Manuscript extract from No.* 130, *Jan.* 20, 1873.)

James H. Chichester, principal owner.

IV.

(*Newspaper clipping from Gibraltar "Chronicle," Jan.* 31, 1873.)

In the *Chronicle* of 13th December last appeared a short paragraph announcing the arrival of the vessels *Dei Gratia* and *Maria Divina*, the latter of which

was found abandoned at sea by the former. An inquiry into the case was at once instituted, and has been going on ever since. As the circumstances of the case are very extraordinary, a summary of the facts elicited may be of interest. The facts are as follows:

On the 13th of December last a report was made by the master and crew of the British ship *Dei Gratia* that on the 5th day of that month they had found, in lat. 38° 20′ N., long. 17° 15′ W., a derelict ship which they made out to be the American brigantine *Maria Divina*. They further stated that at the time when they fell in with the derelict their own ship, the *Dei Gratia*, was on the port tack, the wind being from the north, whilst the *Maria Divina*, with her jib and foremast staysail set, was on the starboard tack, and also that the derelict was perfectly sound, and that there was not the least apparent cause for her having been abandoned.

This latter statement was in itself so extraordinary that the queen's proctor in the Admiralty Court, F. S. Jollyflood, Esq., ordered a special survey of the vessel in the first instance on the 23d December last by Mr. Austin, surveyor of shipping, and Ricardo Fortunato, diver, accompanied by the marshal of the court, Mr. J. Vecchio. The result of this and a subsequent survey was, in brief, as follows:

1st. As regards the cargo, it consisted of barrels marked as containing alcohol, all of which were well stowed and in good order and condition, except one which had been started.

2d. As regards the exterior of the hull below the water-line, it did not in any part exhibit the slightest

trace of damage, nor was there any appearance that the vessel had come into collision with any other ship, nor that she had struck on any ground or rock, nor, in short, that she had sustained any injury whatever, the hull, the copper with which she was covered, the stem, stern-post, and rudder being all in good order and condition.

3d. As regards the exterior of the ship, a very minute survey showed most clearly that not only had the vessel not sustained any accident, but that she could not have experienced any seriously heavy weather. The whole of the hull, masts, and yards were in good condition, and the pitch in the waterways had not been started, which must have been the case if any bad weather had been encountered. The deck-house, made of thin planking, and six feet in height above the deck, was perfect, there not being a crack in the planking nor even in the paint. The seamen's chests and their clothing found on board were perfectly dry, some razors even being quite free from rust. Moreover, a small vial containing oil for use with a sewing-machine was found in a perpendicular position, which, together with a thimble and reel of cotton discovered near it, had not been upset, as must have been the case if the ship had been subjected to any stress of weather. Spare panes of glass were also found stowed away and unbroken. All the articles of furniture in the captain's cabin, including a harmonium, were in their proper places and uninjured by water, the music and other books being also dry. Finally, the conclusion arrived at by the surveyor, Mr. Austin, is that there exists no apparent reason why the vessel should have been abandoned.

But, in addition to the above facts, a sword was discovered, which, on being drawn from its scabbard, exhibited signs of having been smeared with blood and afterwards wiped; further, the top-gallant rail had marks on it apparently of blood, and both the bows of the vessel had been cut, to all appearances, with a sharp instrument. No bills of lading nor manifest were found on board. The effects in the captain's cabin were of considerable value, and proved that a lady and child had been on board.

The ship's log, which was found on board, showed that the last day's work on the ship was on the 24th November (sea time), when the weather allowed an observation to be taken, which placed the vessel in lat. 36° 56′ N., long. 27° 20′ W.; the entries on the slate log were, however, carried up to 8 A.M. on the 25th, at which time the vessel passed from W. to E. to the north of the island of St. Mary's, Azores, the eastern point of which at 8 A.M. bore S.S.W., six miles distant. The distance of the longitude of the place where the *Maria Divina* was found from that of the island of St. Mary's is 7° 54′ (equal to about 420 statute miles), and the corrected distance of the longitude from the position last indicated on the log is 1° 18′, so that the vessel had apparently held her due course for ten days after the 25th of November, the wheel being loose all the time.

But the log of the *Dei Gratia* shows that during the time from the 25th of November to the day when she met the *Maria Divina*, the 5th of December, the wind was more or less from the north, and that she was on the port tack during the whole of that period. It

appears therefore almost impossible that the derelict should have compassed within the same time a distance of 7° 54′ E., at all events on the starboard tack, upon which she was met by the *Dei Gratia*, and the obvious inference is that she was not abandoned until some days after the last entry was made in the log.

Naturally various theories are set up to account for this extraordinary series of facts, and the sword and blood-stains found are held to point to some deed of violence. Be this as it may, the fact remains that up to the present date not a word has been heard nor a trace discovered of the captain or the crew, the lady or her child. The captain—B. S. Boggs by name—is well known in Gibraltar, and bore the highest character. It can only be hoped that by giving the utmost publicity to the circumstances some light may be thrown upon this at present most mysterious case.

V.

(*Manuscript extract from No.* 131, *Feb.* 12, 1873.)

I have examined the sword to which the article in the Gibraltar *Chronicle* refers. It was found on the floor of the cabin of the *Maria Divina* by the marshal of the court; it is evidently of Italian make, and bears a cross of Savoy on the hilt. It remains in the custody of the court. The chronometer and ship's papers cannot be found.

VI.

(*Manuscript extract from No.* 132, *Feb.* 7, 1873.)

Result of analysis adverse to blood existing on sword or wood-work belonging to the *Maria Divina*.

VII.

(*Manuscript summary of report on "M. D." by Captain R. W. Weld, U. S. N.*)

Mutiny highly improbable. Cuts in the bows merely splintering of planks due to straining. Ship abandoned in a moment of panic, and for no sufficient reason.

VIII.

(*Manuscript extract from No.* 133, *Feb.* 12, 1873.)

Value of vessel, $15,000.

IX.

(*Manuscript extract from No.* 135, *March* 10, 1873.)

The *Maria Divina* has just cleared for Genoa with her original cargo, taken in at New York, and in charge of Captain George H. Hatch, sent out to this port for the purpose by the owners in New York.

X.

(*Manuscript included with No.* 142, *April* 4, 1873.)

Letter from J. A. Nickelsen, Uetterström auf Föhr, Prussia, *viâ* Hamburg (date March 24th), to U. S. Consul at Gibraltar, asking for information regarding the *Maria Divina*, at the request of the mothers and wives of missing seamen. Writer states that he knew three of these; they were respectable, peaceable men and first-class sailors.

XI.

(*Newspaper clipping from Gibraltar "Chronicle," Nov.* 20, 1873.)

MARINE INTELLIGENCE.

Cleared, Nov. 19:—

H.M.S. *Vanguard*, for Lisbon; H.M.S. corvette *Drat*, for Malta.

Steamers: *John C. Tree*, for Bilbao; *Estrella*, for Huelva.

Barkentine: *John T. Marsh*, for New York.

(*Pencil-note on margin.*)

Effects of missing master of *Maria Divina* shipped on *John T. Marsh*. Inventory shows that no articles of value had been left on board, with exception of an octant, a one-dollar Spanish coin (gold), a silver watch, one dollar and twenty cents in U. S. coin, a sextant, and a flute. The only paper found was a German document in a tin canister.

XII.

(*Newspaper clipping from Boston "Daily Advertiser," Jan.* 27, 1885.)

MARITIME NEWS.—DISASTERS.

Brig: *Maria Divina*, Walker, from Boston for Hayti, struck on Roshells Reef, Jan. 3d, and will probably be a total loss.

XIII.

(*Manuscript extract from Boston "Daily Advertiser," May* 15, 1885.)

Captain of brig *Maria Divina* charged with wilfully wrecking his vessel off the coast of Hayti, January 3d.

XIV.

(*Manuscript.*)

Trial begun July 20, 1885; continued 21st, 22d, 24th, 27th, 28th, 30th, August 5th, 11th; concluded 16th. Jury disagreed.

XV.

(*Manuscript extract from diary of Dr. M. A. Asterly, of Furnas, San Miguel, Azores, Sept.* 17, 1873.)

Called September 15th by Lorenzo Fidalgo to visit

unknown castaway; found patient delirious in hut by Usor Creek; quieted down 16th. Grew worse towards evening, and died unconscious about midnight. Malarial fever and utter prostration. Yesterday afternoon, knowing his end to be near, the man told me a very curious story, which I set down here as I remember it. His mind may still have been wandering, though I am inclined to doubt it, notwithstanding the improbability of his tale.

It was about November 25th that matters began to go wrong. Up to that day nothing of the slightest importance had happened during the voyage. The captain was a good man, and as we were a good crew, we liked him all the better for making us do our work up ship-shape. All told, we were nine on board; the captain, his wife and child, myself (mate), and five seamen. Cargo, spirits for Genoa.

It had gone three bells of the first watch when I heard the captain shouting to me excitedly, and I tumbled up on deck in a hurry. He was walking up and down bareheaded, in his shirt-sleeves, and in the moonlight his face looked so drawn and haggard that I could not help asking what was the matter. When he saw me, which I don't think he did at once, he ordered me to get the jolly-boat out and pipe up all hands; then he ran into the cabin, and a moment later jumped into the boat with two men. "Lower away! And you, sir," he called out to me, "bring the ship round, and keep near us."

"Ay, ay, sir," I answered, taking the wheel and shoving her hard a-lee. While we were in stays one of the

seamen, named Mehlen, came aft, and I asked him what had happened.

"Damned if I know, sir!" he answered, in a curiously unsteady voice. "It was this way. I had a hold of the wheel, and was kind o' lookin' up at the stars, 'n' the missus she was settin' about ten foot for'ard o' me, and to port, holdin' on to the little 'un; 'n' the next thing I hear war a kind of a snap an' a cry an' a sharp splash, like as if some 'un hed flipped a big hawser across the top of the water; 'n' when I looked down they was gone, chair 'n' all; 'n' the devil of anything in the water but bubbles in the ship's wake. When I come round a bit I made for the cabin and tol' him. You seen the rest. She war goin' jus' 's steady 's she be now, and I reckon 'twer'n't nothin' 's we know of yanked 'em to the bottom quicker'n Jersey lightnin'. Cap'n," he added, lowering his voice to a whisper, "that war the ole man hisself, and you 'n' me 'n' the rest of us 'd better be stowin' our chest for 'ternal darnation."

At first I thought the man might have been drinking, but there was no grog to get at, and he was as steady a man as we had on board. Moreover, I saw that he was really frightened; and then there were the facts. I felt shaky myself, for there is nothing that unhinges a man like a thing he can't understand, and I didn't understand how the *chair* had gone overboard. The lady might have had a fit, or gone mad, or jumped, or something; but the chair? And then, again, things don't disappear in that way in a perfectly calm sea. There was something more than I could account for, and I did not like it any more than Mehlen did.

By this time we had worn round, and, the wind hav-

ing suddenly slackened, were slowly working our way back. The other two men had come aft, and all four of us strained our eyes to catch a glimpse of the boat; but though we were just about where she should be, not a sign of her was to be seen. We hailed through the trumpet, whistled, fired our revolvers, and hailed again; but not a sound came back in answer; and after laying to for about an hour we gradually became convinced that the boat had disappeared as suddenly and as mysteriously as the captain's wife.

For a long time we stood together in silence by the wheel, feeling a nameless horror creep over us like a damp cold, and spread slowly through our veins. We were threatened by some terrible, unknown, unseen danger, some appalling power that struck suddenly, silently, fatally, and without warning. We did not know what it was, whence it came, or how, and the next second it might be our turn to be seized. It is to our credit that during this agony of fear not one of us for an instant thought of flying from this fatal spot and abandoning our comrades without some further effort to save them. By daylight we might be able to distinguish what was invisible even in the bright moonlight, and so I advised two of the men to turn in; Mehlen and I kept watch. We reloaded our arms and paced the deck silently, while the slightest noise made us jump up with alarm and tremble violently. Half an hour later the other men came up again. It had occurred to them that they might no longer find us when it was their turn to come on watch, and they preferred to be near us. I sent one of them aloft, but he merely stayed a few minutes, and came back to report that you

could see no more from the cross-trees than you could from the deck. I knew that he was frightened, and feeling as I did myself, I had not the heart to send him up again.

So that interminable night passed, as it seemed to us, second by second, and when dawn came we presented a pitiable appearance indeed. But with the warm sunshine matters began to look different, and we even chaffed one another feebly at our fears of the night before. At the same time there was no denying the facts, and we could offer no better suggestion than Mehlen's, who stoutly maintained that it was the "ole man hisself" who had kidnapped our shipmates.

All day long we cruised around the same spot, but saw nothing; and as the moon rose the superstitious terror which we had been able to fight off during the daytime once more took possession of us. No fortune, however great, could have tempted us to spend another night in this neighborhood, and we determined to pursue our course. As yet we had not thought of the future, nor of what explanation it would be possible for us to make on reaching port; for my part, if I thought of the future at all, it was of a future spent entirely on dry land, and I fancy my men were much of the same mind.

Though we had neglected to have them struck, I judge it must have been about five bells when I began to feel nervous and apprehensive. Mehlen was again at the wheel, and I was standing beside him, looking ahead in a vague way and thinking about the mystery. The moon was on our port bow, and invisible from

where I stood in the shadow of the mainsail; to starboard the sea was one glimmering sheet of silver, slightly tinged with yellow. We were going about five knots, rather less than more, and instinctively I turned a moment to look back at the spot we were leaving and wish we were making better time. As I turned round again, a tall, dark column rose suddenly from the bright surface of the water on our beam; neither noise nor apparent motion accompanied it, yet there it remained in the same relative position as we advanced, neither gaining nor losing. For a few moments I could neither move nor speak; the strength had gone out of me as water flows from an overturned bucket, and I leaned against the rail more like a wet rag than like a man. I was vaguely conscious of wondering whether I was awake or dreaming, but it was rather a sensation than a thought, and the numbness which pervaded my limbs was beginning to creep over my senses also, when I was startled from my lethargy by a gasping shriek from Mehlen. "Oh, my God! look!" The top of the column suddenly shot out at right angles over the deck. It seemed to me that I heard a stifled cry, followed by a sort of whistling plunge, and the next moment I lay at the foot of the ladder on the forecastle floor. Mehlen and another man, whose name, I think, was Burt, were lying beside me, panting; but the fourth? We did not dare ask one another what had become of him, but resolutely and in silence we fastened the hatch, and sat down hand in hand to listen, while the blood throbbed in our temples and we trembled hysterically.

About an hour passed thus, when Mehlen asked, in

a faint voice, if there was any rum within reach. I knew that it would be imprudent to trust the men in their present state with a full bottle, so I opened my locker in the dark, half emptied the flask on my clothes, and brought out the remainder. Under its influence we rallied somewhat, lighted a lantern, and after swallowing a few mouthfuls of biscuit, sat down again to talk over the situation. The men were naturally superstitious, as seamen are, and would be satisfied only with the hypothesis that the mysterious power that was hunting us down could be but the devil himself. Not having been raised before the mast (in fact, I only took to seafaring late in life), I held a different view, which, as subsequent events proved, was a correct one; but I saw that it would be useless to argue with them in their present state of mind, and so I remained silent, while they forgot the horror of the moment in speculations of horrors to come.

Sleep was, of course, out of the question, and to us the night seemed interminable, but eventually wore away; and when daylight came I began to prepare for the next evening's probable visitation. I sent Burt to the wheel, and, assisted by Mehlen, I unshipped the smoke-pipe of the galley stove, replacing it by a hollow cast-iron cylinder, in the walls of which we bored a number of peep-holes. The lower flange we screwed securely to the deck, collected a number of tools, and after cleaning our revolvers and a rifle which I had found in the captain's cabin, we lay down for a nap about noon.

We might have been asleep an hour or so when the

brig gave a sudden quick lurch to port, and as she slowly righted herself the deck-planks began to creak as if beneath some huge weight. Without a thought of our companion, we rushed to the hatch and secured the bar. Above us we could hear a slow rubbing noise, like the squeak of a squeegee; then all was quiet again. We were certainly much terrified still, but our terror was no longer the same superstitious awe that paralyzed our brain as well as our bodies, for, however formidable, it was evident that our pursuer was a material being, not an intangible supernatural power. It was no more than a hitherto unknown sea-monster, possibly the last of its species, of gigantic size and power, and capable of extraordinary rapidity of motion. But to these qualities, I reflected consolingly, we could oppose human ingenuity and intelligent courage. The danger was no less than before, but, thank God! it was a real danger which we could look in the face.

After considerable hesitation—for with all my philosophy I did not feel over-bold—I passed my head through the opening in the deck, and looked through the peep-holes of the cast-iron box. At first I could not make out anything clearly, but soon saw that we were surrounded on three sides by a dark, slimy wall about forty inches high, that slowly expanded and contracted at intervals of a few minutes. Looking down the deck, I made out two long lines, the one decreasing in size, the other growing larger, and running the whole length of the ship. Just in front of the mainmast, and on the starboard side, the ridge curved inward, and from a short thick coil behind the foremast rose a

column about ten feet high, stemmed on the deck by what appeared to be short fins or wings spread out like a fan. This column, owing to the interference of the mast, I could only partially see. Save for the slow heave of its breathing the huge animal lay perfectly motionless, and I was wondering what its object might be, when, looking upward, I described Burt in the cross-trees, gazing down with a terrified, fascinated expression; he was evidently on the point of falling, and it seemed to me that his movements were no longer under his control. Even as I was looking, his body moved slowly forward until I could not understand how he retained his equilibrium; and a moment later he dropped.

I stumbled down from the platform and sank on to the floor, faint and sick. Mehlen gave me some brandy, which revived me somewhat, and asked what I had seen to take the stiffening out of me so completely. I told him that we had the sea-serpent on board, and that he had, before my eyes, pulled Burt off the mast, as a cat or a snake draws a bird off a tree-branch, by the mere fascination of his eye. A minute later the rubbing noise began again, stopped for a second, as though the animal were hesitating; then, having found the scent, had lain down to wait. It was some time before either of us dared to move; our situation was a solemn one, and might even have been called hopeless, if ever there is such a one below heaven. But as we became more familiar with the presence of the danger, curiosity finally prevailed over our fears, and with infinite precautions I passed my head into the observation box and looked out. Within two feet

of me the huge head rested on the deck; the eye, now closed, was nearly abreast of the peep-hole. The head, six feet long, more or less, was of a rich dark bluish-green color, shaped somewhat like a cobra's, and rimmed with a broad band of bright yellow that glowed in the sunlight like gold; behind the bulge of the occiput the rugged skin was ruffled into swollen fat ridges, and as far as I could see (eight feet or more) it seemed scaly, like that of an alligator rather than of a fish, and shone with a species of dull iridescence, changing in color as the light struck it. The mouth, outlined by a black glistening burr of horn-like substance, must have been five feet long; and from the fork at the rear end a glutinous fluid oozed out on to the deck, emitting a sickening, powerfully alkaloid odor.

It was impossible, of course, to insert the rifle into the observation box, so I instructed Mehlen to bore a hole through the upright rim of the hatch, and fire a shot, to see what effect a bullet would make upon the monster's carapace. When the smoke had cleared away I realized that the shot had been useless. A slight tremor ran along the folds of the skin, across which a metallic streak showed where the bullet had passed without penetrating; the eye slowly opened, and then I fully understood how poor Burt had been drawn from his refuge in the cross-trees. It would be impossible to describe the wonderful splendor of that living jewel—a moving moon-stone eight inches in diameter, deep, soft, persuading, and so gentle that I could have gazed forever at its changing tints of the most exquisite opalescent sea colors. The pupil was neither round like that of a fish, nor oblong like that

of a cat, but more nearly resembled a moving funnel, into which the colors of the iris, concentrated and deeper, flowed with a spiral motion, now slower, now faster, then stopping to flow outward again and dissolve in the luminous outer ring. It was only with the greatest difficulty that I could draw my eyes away, and had it not been that the fate of my shipmate constantly warned me of the danger of that beautiful gem, I could have gazed into its liquid depths until the control of my senses had been lured away from me. But with a great effort I broke the spell and jumped down into the darkness of the forecastle, where wonderfully colored fiery circles stared at me from every corner.

Mehlen stayed but a short time in the box; when he came down, dazed and enthusiastic, he was muttering to himself.

"It's a tarnation pity, but I guess we'll have to do it."

"Do what?" I asked.

"Why, spike his port fire, cap'n," he answered. "We may reach his brain, but that seems nearly too much to hope for; 'tany rate, if we can put a dead light on that glim of hisn, he'll prob'ly steer straight for home, wherever that may be."

"Yes, and lash the brig to pieces in heaving anchor," I objected.

"That's so, cap'n," Mehlen answered; "but I don't see as we have any choice."

In his present position, however, we could not aim at the monster's eye through any of the peep-holes, for the box was so small that our revolvers would

only fit in the centre. So we resolved to wait, and by turns we watched a few minutes at a time; and in return the monster watched us, immovable and silent. Towards evening it opened its colossal jaws to yawn, and the indescribable, overpowering stench that followed nearly sickened us. But after a pull at the brandy bottle we resumed our weary task. All through that night we gazed into the phosphorescent well of light, and hour by hour through the following day, and again all that night, until once more the same superstitious feeling of awe crept into our souls; for instinctively we felt the colossal, incredible age of this sea-saurian witness of preandronic epochs, to whom the building of the pyramids was as an occurrence of yesterday. Mechanically, like dream-walkers, we stepped up and down from our station; and of all these hours I remember but one feeling, one thought, or rather perception—that "IT" had not moved.

On the morning of the second day as I went on watch I noticed that the expression of the eye had changed. It was no longer gentle; it had become malicious, and a low, leering cunning characterized its purpose. I called out to Mehlen to look out; the next moment a quick flash passed before my eyes; I pressed the trigger, and with the crash of the report fell forward on to the floor, as the ship shot ahead with a sudden spring.

When I regained consciousness the brig was pitching as in a heavy sea, though there was no sound of wind whistling in the shrouds. I raised myself slowly, for I was badly bruised, and looked around, but in the darkness I could see nothing. My memory was

still a blank, and, obeying a natural instinct, I took down the bar and pushed back the hatch. With the fresh air the recollection of the past few days returned to me, and wondering, doubting, yet incomprehensibly secure, I thrust my head through the opening and looked out at the clear sky above. I understood what had happened, and that at last we were free again. Twenty fathoms away, the sea was as calm as a pond, and we only were tossing, not the waves. For the first time in many years I prayed, thanking God for our wonderful delivery, and recognizing his power. But this excitement did not last. Mehlen soon joined me on deck, and, now that the sense of danger was gone, we looked at the immediate future calmly. We were yet too unstrung to reach any satisfactory conclusion; immediate action was not necessary, so we set to work washing the deck to get rid of the horrible odor which the monster had left behind, and which emanated from a dark, slimy substance that marked his position on the white planking.

Towards evening, after our supper, we talked the situation over. If we went into port, we should have a long story to tell, and who would believe it? We should be arraigned, without a doubt, and cross-examined in dock. My past history I did not wish to have investigated, and Mehlen was not entirely devoid of fear as to what an inquiry into his past might bring to light. So we determined to abandon the ship, take the remaining boat, which was sound and well fitted, and steer for some island where we could live unknown and undisturbed. It was essential that our disappearance should be complete, and so all

the next day we labored to replace everything as it was before disaster had overtaken us. Towards night, having taken the instruments and ship's papers, and having carefully surveyed the ship we were about to leave, we put off, and after the usual hardships that beset castaways in a small boat, we eventually landed here. It is not more than a month since I buried my comrade, and now, doctor, you tell me it is my turn. Well—Amen!

A SPANISH VENDETTA

A SPANISH VENDETTA

AS you leave Los Arcos by the Muez road you will notice on the right a low stone structure that stands alone nearly two hundred yards beyond the last inhabited houses of the town. In itself the building does not differ materially from the common type of house that you meet in the Ebro Valley. Like the rest, it is built of the striped red sandstone of the country, and roofed with irregular tiles of a dull red color. Like the rest, its façade is pock-marked with bullet-holes, and spotted with shallow, rough-edged circles, blackened in the centre, and left there by some impotent cannon-ball, a few of which are still lying in the gutter at its foot. Above the door-way a pretentious coat of arms spreads its mutilated stone feathers and casts a grotesque shadow across the front wall, a few blocks of which have been slightly shifted from their symmetrical position.

One afternoon in March, within the conscious memory of boys of twenty, two men wearing the peasant dress of the country were standing in the door-way of the little house, and smoking silently as they leaned against the posts. It was late, and the villagers were returning from the fields in small groups. As they passed, many of the men nodded a short "good-even-

ing" to Sallusteano Ycasa and his brother Julio, wondering what the two surly and unpopular brothers might be doing here so late. In this primitive district, however, impertinent questions were often answered by a knife-cut, and the passers-by contented themselves with wondering inwardly, and answering the question themselves as suited their individual fancy. It was no business of theirs, and as they were practical people they continued to discuss the morrow's work without alluding to the cause of their curiosity.

A few minutes after the last of them had disappeared behind the houses, Julio threw himself away from the wall with a twist of his shoulders, and, turning to his brother, said: "He has not passed."

"He has not passed," the other answered, sententiously; and, flinging away the stump of his cigarette, he looked meditatively at the little smoking cylinder of tobacco which had rolled out of the paper and lay in the middle of the road. Then he examined his nicotine-stained fingers, and rubbed them against the sandstone wall; but as the brown stain did not yield so easily, Sallusteano shrugged his shoulders, and began pulling at the handle of his knife, after the fashion of a man who has something to do and is hesitating before setting to work.

"Well," said Julio, looking at him interrogatively, "are we going?"

Sallusteano loosened his wine-skin, and, holding it out at arm's-length, he let a thin stream of the purple liquid spurt into his mouth, shivering slightly as he swallowed it. Then, crossing himself quickly, he sprang out into the middle of the road, and called to his brother, "*Vámonos!*"

For half a mile, until they reached the top of the grade, neither of them spoke. Suddenly Julio stopped, and, pointing to the approaching figure of a man, he called out, "See! that must be Juan José!"

"In truth," the other answered, "it is he; I know his walk. We will go a little farther."

As they went along each opened his ugly curved *navaja*, carefully adjusted the stop ring, and wound his *manta* several times around his left arm, leaving a flap that fell in front over his hand and concealed the knife, which he held by the blade, with the handle turned outward.

"This is a good place for a cross," the elder said, presently, as they came to a pile of stones by the roadside. "You take the left; I'll stay here; and mind you let me attack first. We must finish this to-day."

Meanwhile Juan José was approaching rapidly. He was a tall, lithe-looking fellow of twenty-four or five, with bold features and a graceful, strong figure. Sometimes, when Frascuelo or Lagartijo came to this part of the province with their *cuadrilla*, and one of these had been wounded, Juan José officiated as *banderillero* or *picador*, and he now wore the latter's conventional side whiskers and smooth lip and chin. He was dressed in the Navarres peasant costume, but his brown velvet knee-breeches fitted close and smoothly, and the linen bag that bulged out of the opening at the knee was white and of finer material than was usually worn. His purple sash was also of fine flannel, and the blue and white *manta* slung over his shoulder was an unusually handsome one. On his feet he wore leather sandals, and above these, blue worsted gaiters that reached up

to the knee. His head was uncovered, although he had the usual red handkerchief tied about his temples, and a wine-skin and knife hung from his belt.

As he was walking with his eyes on the ground, he did not notice the Ycasas, who were waiting for him, until, casually raising his head, he found himself nearly upon them. Notwithstanding his natural bravery, and the habit of looking danger straight in the face which he had acquired in the arena, his heart beat fast, and he could not repress a little cry of affright, on seeing himself suddenly confronted by these two men, to meet whom meant blood for any of his family. His bull-fighter's training, however, now stood him in good stead. Without awaiting their attack, he flung his useless *manta* aside, loosened his knife, and, grasping the handle of his three-pronged hoe in both hands, he threw himself upon Sallusteano, who turned to run; the next moment his head was violently jerked back as the iron teeth crunched through his skull, his knees gave way, and he fell backward on the road, with his legs bent under him, dead. Before Juan José could turn, Julio, with a low growl of rage, had thrust his dagger between his ribs; he had put all his strength into the blow, which fell somewhat sideways as the other turned, and the knife, widening the gash, was wrenched from his grasp. In the hope that his adversary would fall, he paused a moment; then, seeing that Juan José had drawn his *navaja* too, he sprang at him with the howl of a wild animal, and clutched his throat as the other struck him squarely below the left arm. Both men fell together over the body that lay stiffening on the road, and for a few seconds, with their limbs

interlocked, they writhed on the ground, panting and groaning. But soon their movements grew more feeble and slow. Juan José's hand dropped from the handle of the knife which he had savagely jerked back and forth in the open wound, his head rolled over sideways, and his left arm gave way under the weight of Julio's body, which crushed him to the ground. Once or twice his legs twitched convulsively, while the strong, knotty fingers stiffened and tightened around his throat. Then all was quiet.

Several hours passed before he awoke. Day was breaking, and the cold damp air made him shiver. He felt a dull pain in his side, as if the numbness that paralyzed his other limbs were acting as an incomplete anæsthetic. He turned his head slightly, and as he distinguished a gray mass on the road beside him and recognized the body of Ycasa, all the incidents of the preceding day's fight and of the long feud which had existed between the two families came back to his memory. For a moment sensation seemed to be restored to his right hand, and he felt something crawl over his palm and pass through his fingers into the slimy mud which he was clutching. The skin felt stiff and hard, as if some glutinous fluid had dried there, and when he moved he felt the pricking of the imprisoned hairs. He realized that his arm must be covered with blood, and that he himself was dangerously wounded. Was his wound mortal? "Oh, my God, no!" he cried, mentally, as the thought filled him with anguish; not merely because it meant death to him, but because to all of his name it meant dishonor for many years to come.

He was the last grown Valdes, while one of the Ycasas still remained in Los Arcos to jeer at the women and children of his family. He made another abortive effort to rise, but the intense pain of his wound suddenly overcame him, and for a few minutes he lay still, quivering all over. "I *must* live! I *will* live!" he cried out, passionately, and began to pray to the Virgin. Then he felt more reassured, and lay quiet, watching the brightening light in the east, until a heavy stupor came over him and he became half unconscious. While he was lying thus, it seemed to him that at times he heard the measured tramp of men marching in step; but it came and went, and he was too weary to raise his eyelids. "I could not see, anyhow," he said to himself; "Julio is lying across my breast."

Suddenly the weight that held him down was removed; he heard a voice say: "Those two are dead, and this one seems pretty far gone. What shall we do with him, corporal?" Juan José opened his eyes, and to his dismay saw six soldiers standing around him, while the non-commissioned officer was bending over and trying to cut open his shirt. In a moment he had forgotten the languor, the weakness, the pain—all save only that he was a prisoner, and would be sent to the galleys.

"Have pity, gentlemen," he pleaded. "It is a family feud. They are Ycasas; I am a Valdes, and the last man of them. Pass on your way without seeing us. Who will know it? Who saw you pass? You came by at night. Do not make me a prisoner, gentlemen; for the sake of God, for the love of the Virgin,

leave me free! Kill me here rather than let me grow well there. Tomas Ycasa still lives, and you know— Ah, señores, pass on your way!"

The soldiers seemed undecided, and looked at one another inquiringly. Their sympathies were with the wounded man, and they would gladly not only have left him his liberty, but even borne him away to some safe place where he could recover in peace, and then come back to do his duty — for of course it was his duty to return and kill the remaining Ycasa. Finally one of them turned to the officer and asked, "Well, corporal, what shall we do?"

"Do?" he answered, gruffly. "Go to the town, and come back with three stretchers. Come, right about face, and march! No treason here, *por Dios!* Well, *compadre*," he continued, addressing the wounded man, "you don't like it, eh? I am sorry. I dare say the Valdeses are not better than the Ycasas, and yet I should like you to have a chance at that fellow Tomas, you have done so well on these two. But, *hombre, qué!* we can't all have our way in this world. That was said by some great writer before you or I was born, and therefore it must be true." And with these words he seated himself on the pile of stones, while the soldiers tramped off towards the town.

He was a small, spare man, with a wrinkled face, loose, straggling gray hair, and a yellowish imperial, which he constantly stroked while smoking. His little beady eyes, black as coals, and half hidden under his projecting eyebrows, moved quickly from side to side, and never rested on any one object longer than was necessary to see that it was all right. Tio Cucho, as

he was called, had fought all over the world under many different flags, for the color of which he did not care as long as they led him into battle. He had fought with the Carlists in Spain, with the English before Sebastopol, with the French in Algiers, China, and Italy, with Maximilian in Mexico, and under the red flag of the Commune when peace had been signed with the Germans; he had been fortunate enough to escape when the Versaillais took Paris, and had since become quite famous for his daring exploits during the recent Carlist war. He had steadily refused promotion, saying that all he desired was the excitement of a battle, and that if they made him an officer he should have to learn to talk and forget to fight, and both these things were impossible. So at the age of fifty-four he was still a strolling corporal, ordered about from garrison to garrison, and infinitely preferring the rough life of the barracks to the comforts of a more peaceable existence.

He had picked up some sticks in the ditch and begun to whittle them down into small crosses, which he made very symmetrical and smooth. As both his hands were occupied, the smoke of the cigarette which he held between his projected lips filtered through his moustache, and, collecting under his bunched eyebrows, caused him to draw up his little brown face into a grimace that changed with every movement he made. When he had finished the second cross, and compared it with the first to see that they were of a size, he looked up with a satisfied smile, drew his musket up between his legs, and fixed his eyes on Juan José.

"Well, young one," he began, "what have you got

to say—eh? Shall I make a third cross for you, or do you think you'll get over that scratch in your side? You'll get over it, little one; you'll get over it in a month or so. And so you don't want to go to the galleys—eh? See that, now! He kills two men as if they were sucking pigs, and he doesn't think that's enough for the galleys! *Qué! qué!* these young ones!"

Notwithstanding the sarcastic tone in which he spoke, he looked at Juan José not unkindly; and with the quick perception of a sick man, the latter felt it.

"*Por Dios, señor comandante,*" he said, endeavoring to please him by this flattery, "let me go. If I am killed, then it will not matter; and if I kill *him*, I swear to you that I will give myself up voluntarily. See! it was this way. It is thirteen years since my uncle Aciseto and Tomas Ycasa quarrelled on the market-place. The uncle had no arms; Tomas had been out hunting, and had his gun. He shot him down there on the plaza, and there was a fight between the two families. I remain alone—that is true—and all the Ycasas are gone save Tomas, the one who began the fighting. Give me time, señor—a month; not more. *Por Dios*, señor, do not say no; it will kill me if you say no. Think of the women and the dishonored name! Why should it matter to you? Ah! are you an Ycasa?"

"*Callate, hombre*—hold your tongue!" the old man interrupted, sharply. "No, I am no Ycasa—thank God for that! I know the story, and I know you too. Listen: you know *El Trabuco?*"

"If I know him! He is my sworn brother."

"Good. Be quiet, now. *El Trabuco* is my son."

"Gregorio your son! But that is impossible."

"*Will* you be quiet? The devil carry you off, I say!" Tio Cucho cried, angrily. Then softening down again, and speaking quickly as he heard the footsteps of the approaching soldiers: "I shall have you taken to Los Arcos, and when you are well you will be marched to Logroño. In passing through Viana you must stop at Trabuco's and get a glass of wine. I have known a glass to last all night, and in a night you can run down here, do the thing you have to do, and run back. Understand? Good; that's enough. What have you been about so long?" he growled, turning to the soldiers, with an oath. "You lazy lubbers! The devil take you all, you and your ancestors and your descendants, up and down. Now, then, don't stand there as if some one were picking the fleas off your carcasses, you worthless dogs! Put him on first. Gently there! don't you see his skin is cracked, and the boy's half dead? If he cries, I'll break your dogs' jaws. You hear me! Now off with him; go slow, and break step. Here, you; put these two up now, and hurry. You can't hurt them; they're carrion anyhow, dead or alive." And so growling and swearing, the little corporal led the procession up to the house where the Ycasas had waited the day before, gave orders to have their bodies taken up to the church, and at once went to hunt up Niña Mercedes, whom in days gone by he had taught to dress wounds and mix simples.

One morning, about a month later, the inhabitants of Los Arcos stood assembled before the town where the main street joins the broad Viana road. Juan José

was going off to the galleys. The skill and pluck which he had shown in his recent encounter with the Ycasas had won him the admiration of many who hitherto had remained disinterested spectators of this bloody little family war, and all these had come to bid him good-by. In this country, where one man and his knife are usually considered the exact equivalent for another man with his knife, the slayer of two armed men was a curiosity of no little importance; and although it was a flagrant breach of their accepted code of honor to take any notice of a vanquished foe, Juan José's departure was so much more like that of a victorious hero that even Tomas had joined the crowd, and watched his natural enemy from a distance. There was so much evident satisfaction in the prisoner's face, so much self-assurance and simple pride in his bearing, that Tomas instinctively felt that all was not as it should be, and that he was not yet free from danger. Some of the older men were displeased with Juan José's behavior, and mourned over the falling off of virtue among the younger generation. But among the rest, especially among the women, admiration and pity were the only noticeable feelings.

It was time to go. Juan José walked slowly round the semicircle, shook the men silently by the hand, and kissed his kinswomen. Then he turned towards the two *carabineros*, who leaned on their muskets a hundred yards farther down the road, with their backs to the crowd. They were personally responsible for their prisoner, but they knew what manner of man he was, and to prove their confidence had not only not cocked their muskets, but for the last half-hour had not even

looked back to make sure that he was still within reach. Half-way between them and the crowd, a girl stood alone in the road, waiting. As the prisoner came towards her she wiped away her tears quickly, and attempted to smile. Juan José took her head in both his hands, and looked down into her large soft eyes—softer now for the tears that stood in them; then he drew her gently to him and kissed her.

"Don't cry, Pepita dear," he said, trying to console her. "I shall come back to-night," he whispered in her ear.

The girl started, then leaned forward again, and said, sadly, "But not for me, Juan José!"

Half a minute passed thus, neither speaking. Pepita had forgotten all but that her head was on her lover's breast, and that she loved him. She would have remained thus forever.

But he could not forget that they were watched, and that it was time to end this scene. "*Vaya!* little one," he said, awkwardly; "I must say good-by—until to-night," and he gently kissed her hair and eyes.

For a moment she looked up at him with a dazed expression, and suddenly throwing her arms around his neck, she kissed him passionately on the mouth and pushed him away.

"*Pobrecita!*" he said, speaking to himself as he turned away. Half mechanically, he took some tobacco from his pouch to roll a cigarette, which he lighted; then he quickened his step, joined the soldiers, and saying, "*Vámonos, amigos,*" marched away with them down the road.

Late that afternoon they reached Viana, and went

straight to the inn which Trabuco kept under the old town wall. When they entered, he was alone in the low smoky kitchen, lighted by a Roman lamp that hung from the vaulted ceiling, seated on one of the benches under the hood of the fireplace, and looking gloomily into the glimmering oak-twigs on the hearth. At his feet a large greyhound lay asleep, with its nose between its outstretched paws, and a ragged-furred kitten was playing with the end of a string which he absently held between his fingers. In the next room a child was crying, and one could hear the shuffling of the mother's bare feet on the stone floor, and her plaintive, nasal lullaby.

Trabuco rose and came forward to meet the men, and bade them welcome to his house. He threw a fagot of oak branches on the fire, brought the jug of *anisado* from a table in the corner, and, after drinking with the new-comers, ordered his wife to prepare some supper.

"Tio Cucho has been here," he said, presently, to Juan José. "Of course I am willing. He left money for the woman in case— How are the soldiers?"

"Good boys," the other answered. "With cards and brandy you can talk to them."

"Good! You know what to do; you must be back early. I will speak to them."

"As you say, Gregorio."

Trabuco turned, and went straight up to the soldiers, who were playing cards on the raised platform of the fireplace.

"See, friends," he began, in his deep, guttural voice, "I am Juan José's sworn brother. His head, or my

head, it's all the same thing. You know he is a man; so am I. How should we have sworn brotherhip otherwise? Good! Juan José has forgotten something in Los Arcos—you know what—and he is going back there to-night. I shall stay with you. If he does not return, you can take me to Logroño. Who knows the difference there? They want a man; good! I am a man. Have you understood?"

The men were taken somewhat by surprise, and Trabuco's blunt proposition staggered them. At the same time they felt perfectly sure of him; he would remain even if something did happen to Juan José. Then he was not a man to be contradicted. Even if they had not heard of the many desperate things attributed to him, they would have been impressed by the concentrated energy of this small, powerful man, who looked as though he might have been the original of Velasquez's head of Æsop. Finally, however, Juan José was told that he might go. What Trabuco was doing for him seemed so perfectly natural that he never even thought of thanking him; and Trabuco expected no thanks.

About the middle of the night Juan José reached the first houses of Los Arcos, and sat down on a stone to rest. That he was about to commit a murder never occurred to him. He had a duty to perform quickly and perfectly. Just as on that night, a month ago, when he lay wounded on the Muez road, he had made up his mind that he must live, and had thrown his whole energy into merely living, so now his only thought was to kill Tomas, and in the shadow of the silent houses he crept towards the street where the

Ycasas lived. Suddenly, a figure ran out of a dark door-way, and before Juan José could start back he felt Pepita's arms around his neck.

"Not now, Pepita," he said, gruffly, as he pushed her aside. "I need all my strength. Wait a few minutes till I come back. Is he here?"

"No, Juan José," the girl answered, meekly. "He went to sleep at the inn near the church. I think he is afraid. Then shall I wait under the Arcade?"

"Yes, little one. Now leave me quickly. It will not take long."

"God go with you, Juan José!" she cried after him as he turned back towards the plaza.

He found the inn door open as usual, and went in. At the foot of the staircase he removed his sandals, grasped his knife, and ran quickly up the two flights of stone stairs to the guest-room. This was a large hall occupying the whole front of the house, and divided into open stalls like a stable. At the upper end the shutters were thrown back, and the moonlight streamed in. The beds on this side were all vacant. At the lower end, which was imperfectly lighted by a suspension-lamp, several men were snoring. Juan José looked into two of the alcoves, and marking the riding-boots on the floor, he passed on, for Ycasa only wore sandals. The last alcove, larger than the others, was divided by a screen into two compartments, in the first of which a young stranger, with his head thrown far back and his right arm hanging over the bedside, lay fast asleep. Between the bolster and the bedclothes a small revolver had slipped from under the pillow, and lay ready for use by any one except the owner.

Juan José smiled at the idea of trusting to such protection, and crept round the back of the bed into the other compartment, making the sign of the cross over the stranger's head as he passed.

In the second bed Tomas Ycasa was sleeping uneasily, as if dreaming. He lay on his back, with one arm under his head, and the blanket which had fallen aside left his breast uncovered. Juan José raised his knife, and marking the exact spot on the sleeper's breast, he struck quickly and drew back.

Ycasa half turned over on his side, and raised himself from the bed on his shoulders and feet, like a man bent by a sudden cramp. He made one or two quick turns from side to side, then lay back again, quivering all over like a frightened bird, and extended his hands and feet slowly outward. A hoarse gurgling in his throat seemed to choke him; a little stream of blood appeared at each corner of his mouth and trickled down over his chin on to the sheet, and it was all over.

In spite of his exultation Juan José felt weak and faint. He flung open the shutter and looked out into the quiet street. The only sensation of which he was conscious was one of anger with himself for his pusillanimity, yet this anger was tempered with a certain sense of pride at having thus successfully ended the family duel in which the odds had been three to one against him. For some minutes he remained at the window, holding his head in his hands, and breathing in the cold night air. Suddenly he remembered that Pepita was waiting, and he turned to go, but an irresistible fascination drew him back to the bedside of

the man he had killed. Through the shutter he had just opened the moonlight fell full on the quiet body of Ycasa, whose wrinkled face looked greenish and ghastly. On the bright blade of the knife the first three letters of the motto "Viva España" were plainly legible, and the tapering curved handle threw a snake-like shadow over the tumbled bedclothes. Juan José wondered whether he should not pull the knife out, but as he leaned forward he touched the blanket, and the snake-like shadow moved. A sudden fear seized him, and he ran quickly from the room, down the two flights of stairs, and out into the street.

He felt dazed and adrift, and for a moment he could not even remember why he was going towards the market-place. He was conscious of a deep craving for passion of some kind that should fill his heart. Pepita! For a moment he trembled all over; a sense of suffocation overcame him, and he clutched with both hands at the collar of his shirt, which he tore open. Then crying out, passionately, "*Pepita, Pepita, te quiero!*" he dashed down the street towards the plaza.

Early the next day, looking pale and tired, he arrived at Viana. A bluish stubble covered his lip and chin, to which the red dust of the road clung in patches, and his clothes were ragged and disordered. His eyes were unnaturally bright, and he shivered occasionally as with fever. Without speaking he raised the jug of *anisado* to his lips and took a deep draught.

"Here I am!" he said, abruptly, as he sat down on the bench beside Trabuco. The soldiers were still playing at cards before the fire, where they had passed the night. The greyhound rose, stretched out its

hind-legs one after the other, and laying its nose on Juan José's knee, looked up wistfully into his face out of its sad brown eyes; and in an absent-minded way he stroked its head. Through the half-open door Trabuco's wife peered in at the prisoner, but did not dare enter the room. For some time no one said anything, and the soldiers pretended to continue their game. They all felt that Juan José should speak first; but as he sat silent, looking at the smouldering fire, Trabuco finally asked:

"Where is the knife?"

"In its place," Juan José answered, gloomily. He stretched himself wearily and yawned. Then, after another pull at the brandy jug, he said to the soldiers, "It is time to go."

They went out first, and Juan José stood irresolutely before the house, holding Trabuco's hand. "I am going," he said, presently, looking aside as if trying to avoid his friend's eyes. As the other made no answer, he repeated: "I am going, Trabuco. I shall not come back—I know it. Pepita remains alone."

"No," Gregorio answered. "The house is large; she can come here. Is she not my sister now?"

"Good! Then you will see her soon? Tell her—" He paused a moment as if reflecting, then went on again: "No, don't tell her anything. I wish to die, Gregorio, and they will kill me, I know; but I should not wish to die that way. *Vaya, pues, amigo!* I must go."

"Good-by, then, little brother," Trabuco said, putting his hands on the other's shoulders, and looking at him affectionately. "God wills it thus. Perhaps we

may see each other again, who knows? They would like to send me to Cadiz too, perhaps."

"Perhaps," the other acquiesced, as he turned away and joined the soldiers who were waiting for him under the town gate-way.

For some minutes Trabuco stood watching the three men as they descended the hill talking with animation. Presently he went into the house, took down his gun, and cleaned it carefully. When he had finished he laid it on the seat beside him, filled his pipe, and smoked silently for over an hour, with his head in his hands. Then he jumped up as if he had come to some sudden conclusion, loaded his rifle, and whistled his dog.

The next morning the *Gaceta de Logroño* printed the following paragraph:

"DEATH OF THE FAMOUS MURDERER JUAN JOSÉ VALDES.

"At the moment of going to press we receive the news that Juan José Valdes, of Los Arcos, who killed two men a few weeks ago, was shot last evening at dusk. He was being brought into town between two carabineros, whose attention he had so completely engaged by his stories of bull-fights that they neglected to watch the country through which the road passes. Suddenly they were startled by the near report of a gunshot, and Juan José fell to the ground shot through the forehead. It is evident that the shot was meant for one of the soldiers, and that God's providence alone frustrated an attempt to rescue this notorious criminal. We shall print the full details of his career in to-morrow's paper."

THE END

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